

THE DARK SIDE
The Magazine of the Macabre and Fantastic

PRESENTS



BLOOD & BLACK LACE

**The Definitive Guide To Italian
Sex And Horror Movies**

By Adrian Luther Smith

Introduction By Top Giallo Scriptwriter Ernesto Gastaldi



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By
Adrian Luther-Smith

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FOREWORD

by Ernesto Gastaldi

Giallo (yellow) is the colour of the covers for thrillers which were initially printed by the Italian publishing company Mondadori for many decades, but this kind of literature and cinema didn't become truly important in Italian culture until the mid-Sixties. We had a few good Italian *giallo* novels but almost no films. The proof of this situation lies in the fact that when we began to produce our own *giallo* films, producers forced the Italian film-makers to use Anglicised pseudonyms. It so happened that I was one of the first Italian screenwriters who wrote and directed a *giallo* film. *Libido*, a very low budget movie, was my first *giallo* and starred Mara Maryl (my wife) and John Charlie Johns. Who's he? Giancarlo Giannini, of course, now one of Italy's most popular actors!

Following the success of *Libido*, Luciano Martino produced *Il dolce corpo di Deborah* (*The Sweet Body of Deborah*) with Carroll Baker and Jean Sorel, and *Così dolce, Così perversa* (*So Sweet, So Perverse*) with Baker again and Jean-Louis Trintignant. The films sold all over the world and earned a great deal of money. Then Goffredo Lombardo produced *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage*, directed by Dario Argento of course, and all Italian producers realised that well-made *giallo* movies were good business.

You only need a good story, with an intriguing, well-engineered plot, and reasonably talented actors (stars are welcome but certainly not indispensable) and you can make good films with low budgets, which can be sold throughout the world. I think the advantage of being able to produce these films on a low budget is a principal reason for the explosion of Italian *gialli* through the late Sixties and early Seventies. Of course, then violence and blood began to take precedence over scripts, and every new film needed more and more gore. In the end blood and violence can be boring. Sadly, the real *giallo* is dead, but this book is a worthy and long-overdue memorial.

Ernesto Gastaldi

Rome, June 1998.

Filmography

1966

A... come assassino (screenplay)

Libido (director, producer and co-screenplay)

La lama nel corpo/The Murder Clinic (screenplay)

1968

Il dolce corpo di Deborah/The Sweet Body of Deborah (screenplay)

Così dolce... così perversa/So Sweet, So Perverse (screenplay)

1970

Le foto proibite di una signora perbene/The Forbidden Photos of a Lady Above Suspicion (co-screenplay)

1971

La coda dello Scorpione/The Case of the Scorpion's Tail (co-screenplay)

La morte cammina con i tacchi alti/Death Walks in High-Heels (co-story and co-screenplay)

Lo strano vizio della signora Wardh/Next! (co-screenplay)

1972

La morte accarezza a mezzanotte/Cry Out in Terror (co-screenplay)

Perché quelle strane gocce di sangue sul corpo di Jennifer?/Erotic Blue

(story and screenplay)

Il tuo vizio è una stanza chiusa e solo io ne ho la chiave/Gently Before She Dies

(co-screenplay)

Tutti i colori del buio/They're Coming To Get You (co-screenplay)

1973

I corpi presentano tracce di violenza carnale/Torso (co-screenplay)

1974

L'uomo senza memoria/Puzzle (co-screenplay)

1975

Morte sospetta di una minorenne/Too Young To Die (story and co-screenplay)

1982

Assassinio al cimitero etrusco/The Scorpion with Two Tails (co-story and co-screenplay)

1986

L'assassino è ancora tra noi/The Killer Has Returned (co-screenplay)

1995

La strana storia di Olga "O"/Olga O's Strange Story (story)

INTRODUCTION

Blood and Black Lace is a comprehensive guide to those Italian films (and Italian co-productions) which comprise what is commonly referred to as the *giallo* genre. So what's a *giallo*? The term was originally coined to describe the mystery/thriller novels published in Italy which were bound in instantly recognisable yellow covers (*giallo* is the Italian word for yellow). Mario Bava's 1962 Hitchcockian thriller, *The Evil Eye* (*La ragazza che sapeva troppo*) is usually attributed to be the first cinematic *giallo*, although there had been a number of Italian thrillers prior to this which could loosely have been defined as such (like Giacomo Gentilomo's 1943 film, *Cortocircuito*). And while it covers every film which might be defined as a *giallo*, *Blood and Black Lace* also goes beyond the recognised genre boundaries by including a number of horror mysteries (such as *The Bloodsucker Leads The Dance*) and sexy thrillers (like *Fatal Temptation*). These films share the same elements of allure, mystique and madness and so have been included to provide an all-embracing overview. Besides, they will undoubtedly be of interest to those who enjoy lurid Italian movies. From the outset I decided that this particular guide would be unique in retaining the mystery element of the films it covers by leaving the identity of the killer (or killers) undisclosed. Many reviewers of *gialli* seem to take delight in revealing the identity of those responsible for the violence on screen. This approach undoubtedly affords writers the convenience of analysing films more easily but denies the reader the pleasure of unmasking the killer for themselves. Doubtless, some readers of *Blood And Black Lace* will have seen a fair proportion of the films herein, but this is no argument for denying others the enjoyment of being an armchair detective and trying to work out whodunit themselves. Therefore, synopses of each film chart the plot only as far as is necessary to set the scene and pique the interest but leave the denouement open to question. And in a change from the historical approach taken in my *Delirium* guides I was persuaded that *Blood And Black Lace* should be an alphabetical rather than chronological guide. This approach undoubtedly makes the book more accessible for the general reader. Films are listed alphabetically by their English language export title (ie. the title which Italian producers opted to use for releasing their film in English speaking territories around the world). In most cases, this is also their most well-known English language title and should make it easy for readers to quickly refer to a particular film.

Nevertheless, in a few instances I have opted to list films by a title which would be the most familiar to readers (eg. *Gatti rossi in un labirinto di vetro* is listed under its US title *Eyeball*, even though its actual English language title seems to be *The Secret Killer...* but who would have looked it up under this obscure and rather uninspiring moniker?). Elsewhere, *Macchie solari* is listed by its export title *The Victim* rather than its US re-title *Autopsy* because the latter is a shortened re-edit with a different opening score and *The Victim* more accurately conveys the essence of the film and the role played by Mimsy Farmer. Obviously, films for which no English language title is known are listed by their original Italian title.

Aside from the credits and reviews, the supporting information presented here represents the most comprehensive



sive guide to *gialli* on video, laserdisc and DVD currently available. This information has been culled from a wide variety of sources and although every effort has been made to make it as complete and accurate as possible, in a book which covers a mass of international home viewing releases there will inevitably be some errors and omissions.

Nevertheless, I have done my best in the timescale available and perhaps readers will good enough to send any corrections and additions (via *The Dark Side*) for inclusion in a future, updated volume. Running times do not include the distributor logos which often appear before films but do include the complete fade-out soundtrack (even if this plays against a plain black screen). PAL running times are inevitably shorter than films released in the NTSC format (in the USA, Japan) because PAL videos run at 25 frames per second rather than the 24 frames per second which most films are projected at. I will not attempt to exhaustively outline the entire history, format and appeal of the *giallo* in detail in this introduction, because the genre's development and idiosyncrasies are apparent throughout the individual reviews (with many cross-references to films and themes). But it's impossible to ignore a few of the more salient points. Mario Bava set the trend with the aforementioned *Evil Eye* and went on to define the genre with the savagely seductive *Blood And Black Lace* in 1964. Important entries such as *The Sweet Body of Deborah*, *Death Laid an Egg* and *Orgasmo/Paranoia* (all of which boasted the kind of eye-opening titles synonymous with the genre) were a foretaste of the delights to come. In 1969, a young film-maker called Dario Argento delineated the style of future Italian thrillers with *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage*. The peak of *gialli* production, both artistically and financially, came in the early Seventies with a plethora of entrancing entries like Sergio Martino's *Next!*, Duccio Tessari's *Bloodstained Butterfly* and Paolo Cavara's *The Black Belly Of The Tarantula*. These were films which seemed to encapsulate the very essence of the genre. Less talented directors such as

Stelvio Massi and Tano Cimarosa attempted to jump on the bandwagon, but even with the addition of more sex and violence their efforts were poor by genre standards.

Following a brief high in 1975 with the seminal *Deep Red* there was a definite decline in the number of productions, with Italian film-makers switching to violent cop thrillers or sexy comedies. Despite a couple of notable efforts (*The Bloodstained Shadow* and *The Pyjama Girl Case*), the *giallo*, like the spaghetti western, seemed to have become unfashionable. However, the sudden popularity of the American slasher movie in the early 1980s changed all that. This horror hybrid was heavily influenced by its Italian forebears (the first couple of *Friday the 13th* films were basically body count continuations of Mario Bava's *A Bay of Blood*, while the transvestite maniac in Brian De Palma's *Dressed To Kill* adopted *giallo* garb so perfectly he might as well have been in a Cinecitta production).

Ironically, the Stateside stalk 'n' slashers provided the impetus for new spaghetti splatterfests, making mystery killers once again financially attractive to Italian producers. Dario Argento provided a highly-stylised, 'sexed-up' version of his Seventies *gialli* for a new, more youthful, market with *Tenebrae*, while Lucio Fulci's *New York Ripper* demonstrated that the addition of more sleaze and violence does not necessarily make a thriller more effective. There has been a slow but bloody flow of Italian genre entries ever since and a curious inverted fertilisation between the American and Italian markets, with films such as *Basic Instinct* providing renewed stimulus for Italian erotic thrillers. Moreover, the success of Wes Craven's *Scream* films has proved that audiences still have a fascination for horror whodunits. Craven's franchise looks set to carry on well into the millennium, and Italian film-makers will undoubtedly attempt to keep cashing-in on it.

Like spaghetti westerns and peplums, *gialli* have their own definite style and recurring themes. Following the success of *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage*, other thrillers adopted references to animals within their titles. Thus, we have *The Crimes of the Black Cat*; *The Cat's Victims*; *A Lizard in a Woman's Skin* and one of the most provocative examples, *The Iguana with the Tongue of Fire*. Anyone with even a vague knowledge of *gialli* will be aware that certain (fetishistic) attire, such as black (usually leather) gloves, (leather or PVC) trenchcoats and fedora hats, have become intrinsically associated with the genre, almost to a point where their appearance becomes essential. Stylistic cinematic conceits, such as point-of-view shots, have also become heavily associated with the *giallo* (and with it's offspring, the aforementioned slashers). Music is also very important in *gialli*. One composer, Ennio Morricone, is most closely identified with the genre, while his frequent collaborator Bruno Nicolai also provided many of the classic scores. But other less well-known composers have provided aural accompaniments which elevate the productions they are featured in to heights of deliriousness (such as Roberto Nicolosi's jazz score for *The Eye in the Labyrinth* and Gianfranco Reverberi's acid rock in *Delirium*). Furthermore, in *Orgasmo/Paranoia* the plotters use an inane pop number to drive Carroll Baker insane, and Klaus Kinski keeps hearing his dead wife's favourite tune in *Double Face*. Even the *giallo* spoof *Atrocious Tales of Love and Death* features a "sweet melody... which announces the presence of death".

The amateur detective figures who regularly investigate the insidious crimes perpetrated in these films are often more effective than



the police and are likely to be suspects themselves, forced to prove their innocence. Some of those responsible for the heinous acts of violence are attempting to gain an inheritance (as in *The Young, the Evil and the Savage*), cover-up their sexual misdemeanors (*What Have They Done To Your Daughters?*, *Red Rings of Fear*) or perhaps worse of all, are acting as moral avengers against wanton women (*So Sweet, So Dead*, *The New York Ripper*). However, the main reason why murderous deeds are committed in *gialli*, brings us to Freud's 'Primal Scene' theory, which Italian film-makers have repeatedly used to explain away their ridiculous plotlines. According to Freud, a child who witnesses parental sexual intercourse or experiences a situation of sexual humiliation can misinterpret this as a terrifying incident. This can cause that individual to

be traumatised in later life (often through disorders such as psychosis) and may result in him/her indulging in acts of violence over which they seemingly have no control. Such scenarios are evident throughout this book and I will leave the reader the pleasure of discovering for themselves just how prevalent Freudian theory is in this form of exploitation film-making. This ties in with the essential appeal of this kind of psychological cinema: the dual attraction and repulsion of sexual and violent imagery feeds the viewer's desire to know more, to discover the truth. So read on, and immerse yourself in the complexities of the mind, the mysteries of the *giallo*...

Adrian Luther-Smith
London
November 1998



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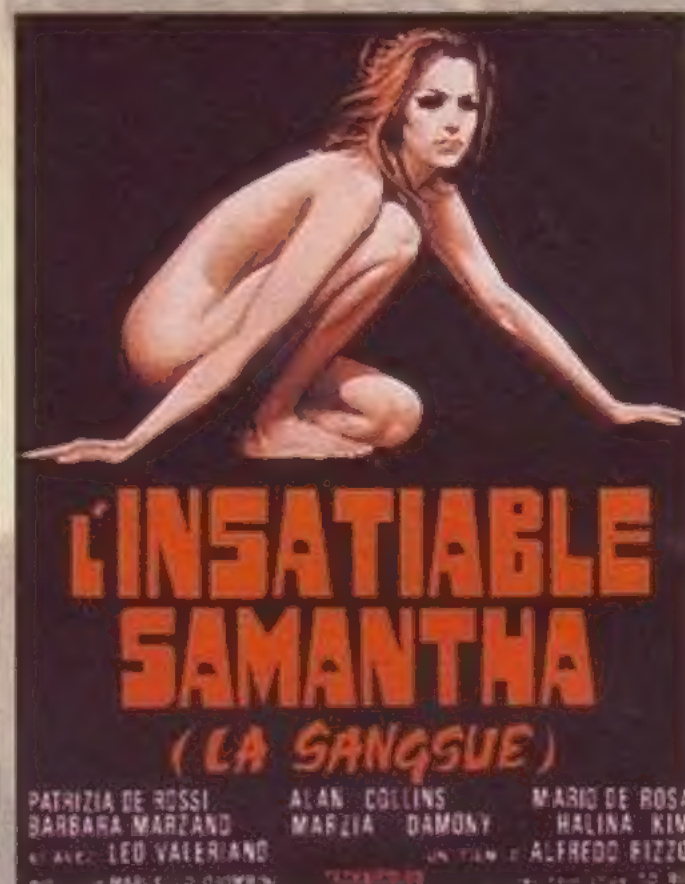


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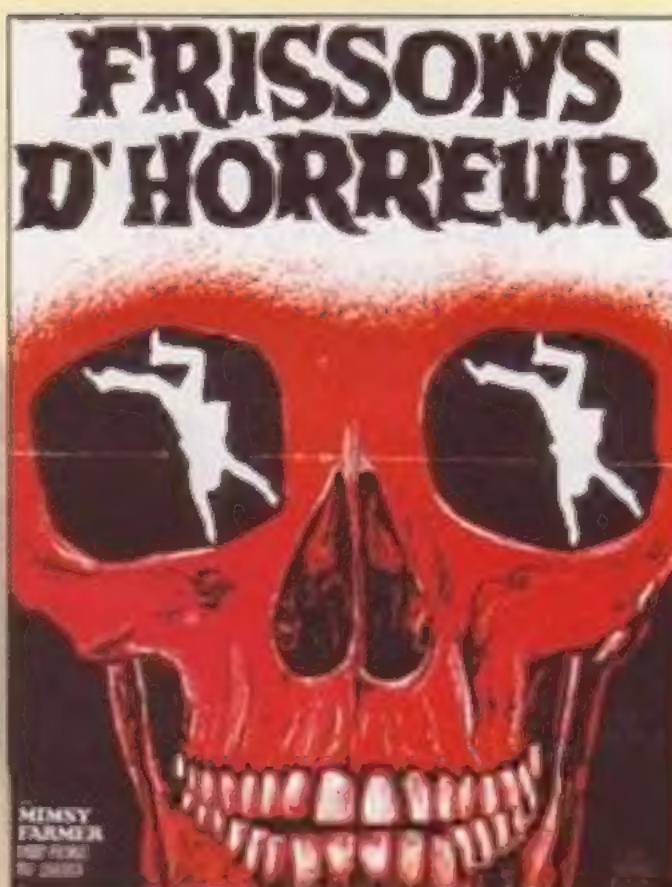
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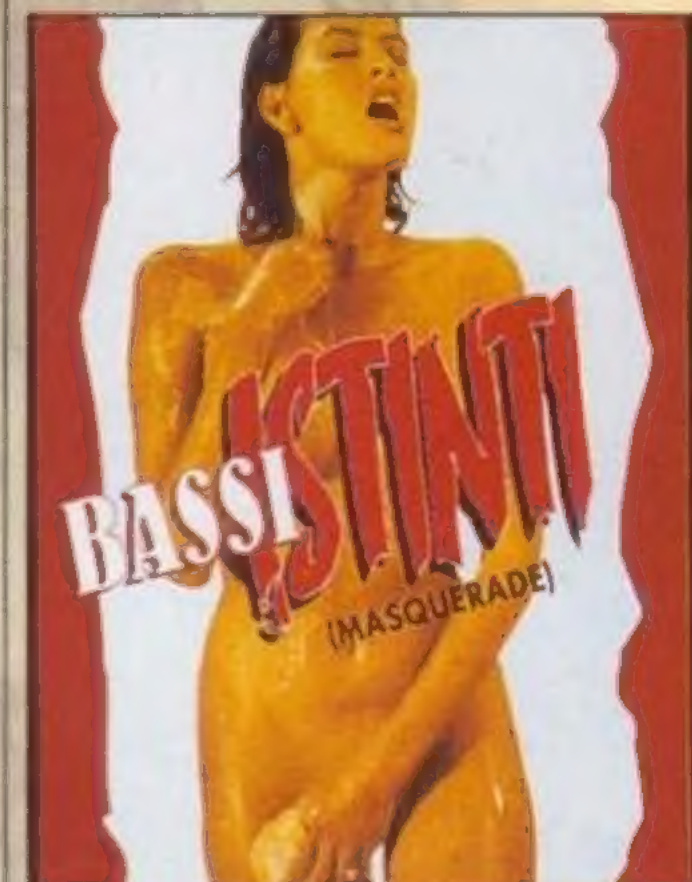
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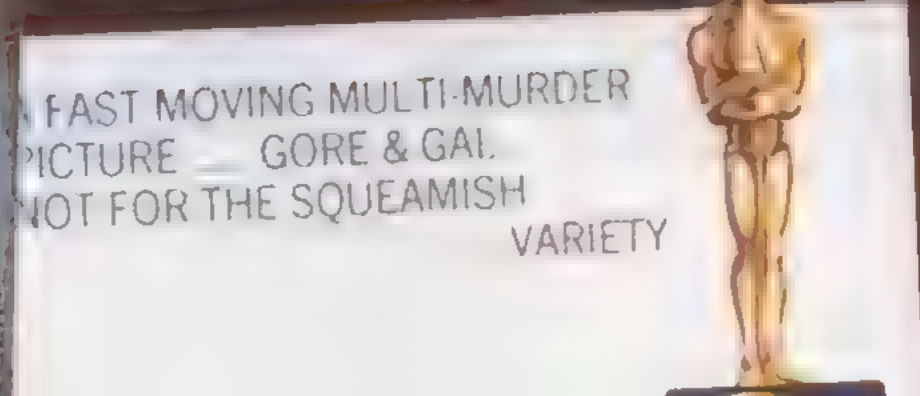
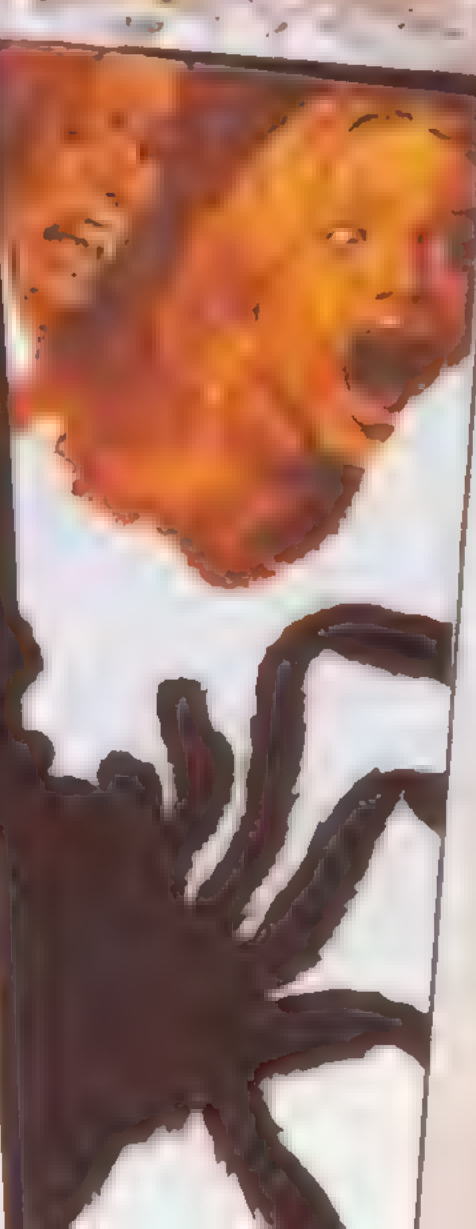
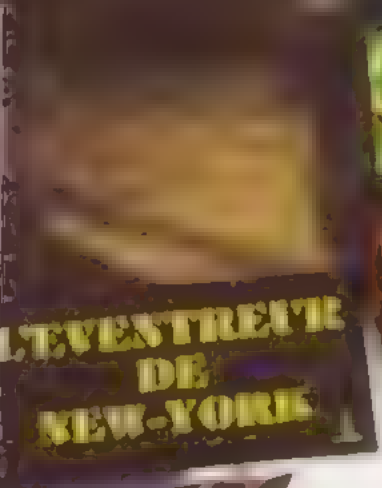
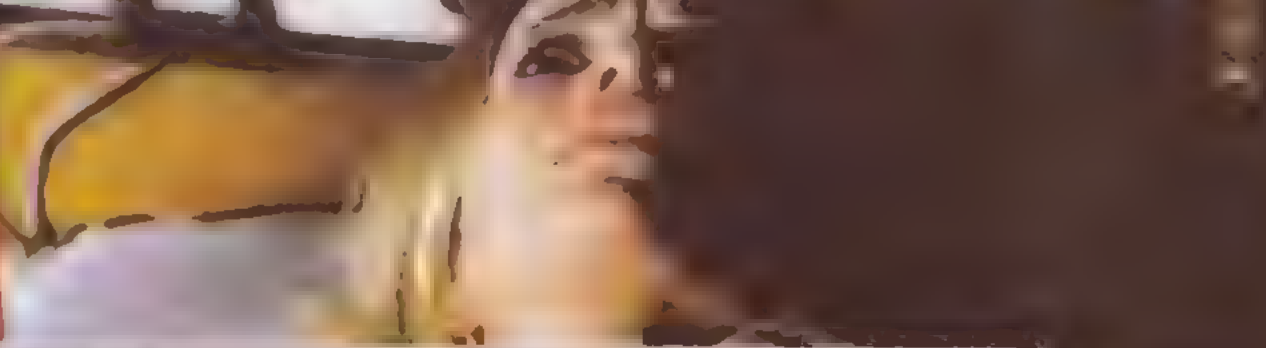
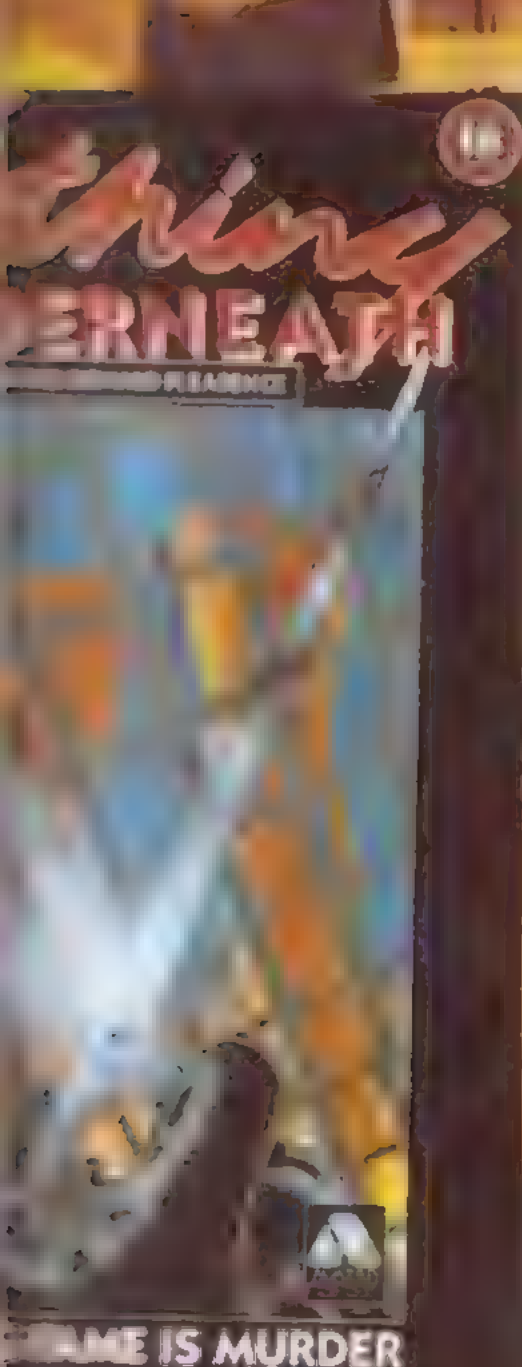
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AMUCK!

Alla ricerca del piacere ('In Pursuit of Pleasure')

Repetition d'un crime (France)

Die Nacht der Rollenden Koepfe (Germany)

Play Hotel (Germany: alternate title)

Hot Bed of Sex (UK: theatrical release)

Maniac Mansion (USA: theatrical title)

Leather and Whips (USA: alternate title)

Violence (?)

Il passo dell'assassino ('Footsteps of the Killer' - production title)

Replica di un delitto ('Replica of a Crime' - alternate production title)

1971 Italy Eastmancolor Cromoscope 98m

Production Company: West Film (Rome)

Director: Silvio Amadio

Producer: Italo Zingarelli

Story and Script: Silvio Amadio

Cinematography: Aldo Giordani

Editor: Antonio Siciliano

Art Director: Enzo Bulgarelli

Music and Music Director: Teo Usuelli

Cast: Farley Granger (*Richard Stuart*), Barbara Bouchet (*Greta Franklin*), Rosalba Neri (*Eleanora Stuart*), Umberto Raho (*Giovanni, the butler*), Patrizia Viotti (*Sally Reece*), Dino Mele (*Sandro*), Petar Martinovic (*Rocco*), Nino Segurini (*Inspector Antonelli*).

An island near Venice: A young American woman, Greta, takes a job as secretary to Richard Stuart, a wealthy author. However, she really intends to look into the disappearance of her former lover Sally. Greta becomes embroiled in sex games with Richard's wife, Eleanora, then sees a porno film which features Sally, and is concerned by Richard's latest whodunnit which has an uncomfortably familiar plot. It emerges that Sally was accidentally strangled during one of the couple's sex romps by Rocco, a mentally-retarded fisherman. Tiring of playing games with the amateur sleuth, the

Rosalba Neri and Dino Mele indulge their desires in Amuck!

FARLEY GRANGER BARBARA BOUCHET



**ALLA RICERCA
DEL PIACERE**

ALLA RICERCA DEL PIACERE
FARLEY GRANGER BARBARA BOUCHET
ROSALBA NERI PATRIZIA VIOTTI
UMBERTO RAHO DINO MELE
PETAR MARTINOVIC NINO SEGURINI

SILVIO AMADIO

PRODOTTO DA WEST FILM
DIRETTORE DEL FILM: SILVIO AMADIO

perverse couple slash their seductive killer's throat then attempt to provoke Rocco attacking Greta in the hope of blaming both murders on him...

This is another seductive erotic thriller from Silvio Amadio. Admirers of Euro actresses are well served by a cast that includes two of the best leading ladies. Rosalba Neri exudes an intoxicatingly evil aura and looks great as ever while wide-eyed Barbara Bouchet obligingly strips off and dons a baby doll nightie within the film's first few minutes. In addition, Neri and Bouchet share a dreamy sapphic scene while a completely gratuitous watery flashback reveals the lesbian nature of Bouchet's relationship with her former close friend. However, the film's charms are not restricted to its female participants, former **Stranger On A Train** Farley Granger is splendid as the kind of suave, serpent-like character he portrayed so well for Hitchcock. Highlights include a tense, well-shot sequence in deadly, water-logged marshlands in which Bouchet is the object of Neri's target practice, and a spellbinding aural-erotic scene which depicts the missing woman's demise as the result of a Bacchanalian sex session. On the downside, it's a pity that the hypnotic 'pleasure' theme Teo Usuelli composed for the debauchery scenes isn't utilised more, because the rest of his score sounds like it was written for an episode of **Star Trek**. Furthermore, the sedate Seventies pace may be too slow for viewers brought up on a diet of MTV and bombastic Hollywood hyperbole.

Video:

USA: Continental; Catalina - 98m 11s, full screen, good quality print but slightly washed out colours as **Amuck!**; Something Weird - as **Leather And Whips**.

Soundtrack:

Germany: Beat at Cinecitta - one track 'Piacere sequence'.





RENZO MONTAGNANI - BEDI MORATTI - EVA CZEMERYS IN

L'ARMA L'ORA IL MOVENTE

UN FILM DI FRANCESCO MAZZEI

CON SALVATORE PUNTILLO - CLAUDIA GRAVI - ALCIRA HARRIS - ARTURO TRINA

FRANCESCO MAZZEI - ADOLFO BELLETTI - FILIPPO MARCELLI

CON MAURIZIO BONUGLIA NEL RUOLO DI DON GIORGIO

MUSICHE DEL MAESTRO FRANCESCO DE MASI COLORE DELLA S.P.E.S. - DR. E. CATALUCCI

SCENEGGIATORI FRANCESCO MAZZEI - MARIO BIANCHI - BRUNO DI GERONIMO - VINICIO MARINUCCI

REGIA DI FRANCESCO MAZZEI



Rare Italian 'Locandina' poster

L'ARMA, L'ORA, IL MOVENTE

('The Weapon, the Hour, the Motive')

1973 Italy Eastmancolor 105m

Production Company: Julia Film S.p.A. (Rome)

Director and Producer: Francesco Mazzei

Story: Francesco Mazzei, Marcello Aliprandi

Script: Francesco Mazzei, Mario Bianchi, Bruno di Geronimo, Vinicio Marinucci

Cinematography: Giovanni Ciarlo

Editor: Alberto Gallitti

Art Director Antonio De Rosa

Music: Francesco De Masi

Assistant Director: Mario Bianchi

Cast: Renzo Montagnani (*Inspector Boito*), Bedi Moratti (*Orchidea*), Eva Czemerys (*Giulia*), Salvatore Puntillo, Claudia Gravi, Alcira Harris

Arturo Trina (*Ferruccio, a boy*), Adolfo Belletti, Adolfo Belletti, Francesco D'Adda, Filippo Marcellini, Don Giorgia, Lorenzo Piani, Maurizio Bonuglia, Don Giorgia.

Don Giorgia, a handsome young priest and teacher in a convent, is involved with two women, Orchidea and Giulia. When he repents and returns to the Church, he is savagely beaten to death. Not long after, Giulia has been killed. Inspector Boito falls in love with Orchidea, who is the main suspect. The key to solving the case seems to lie with an inquisitive boy called Ferruccio, who is kept locked up and drugged. He witnessed one of the murders, but will anyone believe his story?

Without the benefit of an English language version, it is difficult to review this curious provincial and often depth. Nevertheless, in his only directorial effort, former production designer Mazzei creates some arresting images - Don Giorgia lying in a pool of blood surrounded by a phalanx of mortified nuns; a scene reminiscent of *The Devils* in which a group of semi-naked nuns flagellate themselves; and a young boy being menaced by the killer in the skeleton-filled convent catacombs. The film's giallo elements are just part of an overall story of tragic love, misplaced loyalty and child cruelty. However, the end result is never morose and provides compelling viewing, even in Italian. Renzo Montagnani, best known in lecherous roles of the type played by Sid James in *Carry On* films, plays the motorbiking police inspector with surprising conviction. Marcello Aliprandi, who developed the story with Mazzei, would again combine Catholicism and murder in *The Vatican Conspiracy* (1982).

ASSASSINO SENZA VOLTO

('Killer Without a Face')

1967 Italy black and white 90m

Production Company: Dolomiti Cinematografica

Director: Ray Morrison (Angelo Dorigo)

Story and Script: Ray Morrison (Angelo Dorigo)

Cinematography: Carlo Bellerio, Gerald Patrizio

Editor: Angelo Dorigo

Art Director: Giuseppe Aldrovandi

Music: Coriolano Gori

Cast: Mara Berni, Gianni Medici, Giuliano Raffaelli, Janine Reynaud, Lawrence Thierney, Paolo Solvay (Luigi Batzella), Anita Tedesco, Jenevieve Soné, Gabriella Mantovani, Rita Klein.

A woman is chased onto the ramparts of a castle by a gun-toting figure. She stumbles and falls to her death. Barbara, the mentally unbalanced owner of the castle, is the main suspect. However, there is no proof against her and the murders continue. A maid, a bubbly female guest, the mute servant, and the governess are all killed in quick succession. The dénouement reveals that madness is rife and there is more than one killer...

Supposedly set in England, but lensed mainly in the castle near Rome that has long been a favourite location for Italian film-makers.

Assassino senza volto is an opportunistic attempt to incorporate the trappings of gothic horror into a murder mystery. With an emphatic score, heavily-echoing footsteps in the night, a spiral staircase, terrified maids, a stern governess, a suspicious mute, and red herrings aplenty, this is an unremarkable concoction of clichés which is seriously restrained by its low budget. The plot begins and ends with pageants in a local town piazza suggesting that the entire premise was merely a cyclic game. Unfortunately, the manic stare of Barbara, the castle's owner, provides the film's only memorable image.

ATROCIOUS TALES OF LOVE AND DEATH

Giallo Napoletano ('Neapolitan Giallo')

Melodie meurtrières (France)

Leichen Muss Man Feiern, Wie Sie Fallen (Germany)

Atrocious Tales of Love and Revenge

Holland: video sleeve re-title)
 1979 Italy Telecolor Vistavision 115m
 Production Company: Irragazione Cinematografica
 Director: Sergio Corbucci
 Producer: Achille Manzotti
 Story: Sergio Corbucci
 Script: Giuseppe Catalano, Sabatino Ciuffini, Ennio Porta
 Cinematography: Luigi Kuveiller
 Editor: Amedeo Salfa
 Art Director: Marco Dentici
 Music and Music Director: Riz Ortolani
 Assistant Director: Amanzio Todini
 Cast: Marcello Mastroianni (*Raffaele Capece*), Ornella Muti (*Lucia Navarro, Victor's daughter*), Michel Piccoli (*Victor Navarro*), Renato Pozzetto (*Inspector Voghera*), Zeudi Araya (*Elizabeth Over*), Capucine (*Sister Angela*), Peppino De Filippo (*Natale Capece*), Giuseppe Barra (*Giardino*), Franco Javarone (*Gregorio 'Bugsy' Sarda*), Gennaro Palumbo (*Albino*), Carlo Tamberlani (*Joiner*), Natale Tulli, Elena Fiore (*Flomena*), Angelo Pellegrino (*mad woman in garden*), Salvatore Furnari (*Agostino Ampolla*), Mimmo Poli (*cook at mental hospital*), Franca Scudetti (*madwoman with braids*), Ennio Antonelli, Pietro Ceccarelli (*mental hospital inmates*), Armando Curcio, Gianni Imparato.

Naples: Raffaele, a cafe musician, is cajoled into performing a night-time serenade outside an apartment block. However, his mandolin playing is rudely interrupted by gunshots and a young Jamaican man, who plummets from a window above. A camp character is also ejected from a window and Raffaele is compelled to conduct his own investigation. It transpires that a celebrated maestro, Victor Navarro (who is revealed to be impotent), is being blackmailed. Victor Navarro's attractive daughter-in-law, was present at each murder. The amateur detective is drawn to her and becomes embroiled in a mystery involving death threats and a macabre secret.

Sergio Corbucci, the Spaghetti Western specialist, previously penned *Cry Out in Terror*, a film with subtle comic undertones. He signals his intention that this film (like Mel Brooks' *High Anxiety*) is both a homage and outright spoof of the genre by slyly opening *Atrocious Tales* with a juxtaposed image of Hitchcock side-by-side with Toto (the king of popular Italian comedy). With the collaboration of three script-writers, Corbucci avoids the slapstick gags which are an endemic part of Italian homegrown humour and concentrates on moving the narrative inexorably towards the revelation of the mystery (which, like in *The Cat's Victims*, involves a crime committed during the Second World War). Along the way are some smile-inducing variations on standard thriller threats - such as a seemingly deadly snake which turns out to be the innocuous eel which the hero's father has bought to eat, and some offbeat images such as a dead dwarf in a fridge. Marcello Mastroianni is surprisingly endearing as the hapless musician-turned-detective, Renato Pozzetto is amusing as a sarcastic cop who seems clueless but knows more than he lets on, and sexy sirens Ornella Muti and Zeudi Araya set the screen alight as ambiguous femme fatales. Unfortunately, Italian comedies are generally characterised by unbearable musical scores and it is ironic that in a film where music plays such a significant part to the plot, Ortolani's contribution is typically... well... atrocious!

Video: NK Video - 92m 05s, full screen, with English subtitles on a black background as *Atrocious Tales of Love and Death*. The sleeve re-title is *Atrocious Tales of Love and Revenge*.

DVD: Domovideo - 111m 41s, letterboxed as *Stello Napoletano*.



Delineous artwork for the French release of 'A Bay of Blood'

LA BAMBOLA DI SATANA

('Satan's Doll')
 1969 Italy Eastmancolor scope 90m
 Production Company: Cinediorama
 Director: Ferruccio Casapinta
 Story: Ferruccio Casapinta
 Script: Giorgio Cristallini, Carlo Lori, Ferruccio Casapinta
 Cinematography: Francesco Attenni
 Editor: Franco Attenni
 Art Director: Alessandro Dell'Orco
 Music: Franco Potenza
 Cast: Erna Schurer [Scheurer] (*Elisabeth*), Roland Carey (*Jack*), Aurora Battista, Ettore Ribotta, Lucie Bomez, Manlio Salvatori, Franco Daddi, Beverly Fuller, Eugenio Galadini, Giorgio Gennari, Domenico Ravenna, Teresa Ronchi, Ivan G. Scatuglia.

Following the death of her uncle, Elisabeth returns to her family's castle for the reading of his will. She is informed of legends about the castle's ghost and experiences erotically charged nightmares, before being kidnapped by a hooded figure and tortured in the dungeon. Meanwhile, her boyfriend Jack suspects a plot to gain Elisabeth's inheritance and begins his own investigation...

This is another Agatha Christie-inspired *giallo* in the same vein as *Assassino senza volto* but benefitting from higher production values, glorious Eastmancolor and a sense of modish late Sixties fun. The requisite creepy castle, which is inexplicably shrouded in a curious

pink haze, is inhabited by the kind of eccentric oddballs (such as a madwoman in a wheelchair, and a man whose face is kept hidden) we have come to expect. Meanwhile, there are wolves baying outside, storms every evening, skeletons in the dungeons and, of course, a black-gloved killer. The film's kitschy pleasures include the amusing sight of bemused extras jiggling about around a jukebox; Teutonic blonde bimbo Erna Schurer being (unconvincingly) tortured while the zoom lens goes into overdrive, and the overwrought climax in which the killer's identity is revealed. Franco Potenza's oboe and organ-laden score is cheesily reminiscent of British terror tales while the film neatly anticipates Schurer's trip into pure Gothic horror in *The Killers of the Castle of Blood*.

Video:

Italy: Dolly Home Video - 85m 35s, letterboxed as *La bambola di Satana*.

A BAY OF BLOOD

Ecologia del delitto ('Ecology of a Crime')
Reazione a catena (Italy: re-release title: 'Chain Reaction')

La baie sanglante (France and Belgium)
Den Blodige Bugt (Denmark)
Baia sangrenta (Portugal)
Bahia de sangre (Spain)
Carnage (UK: theatrical title)
Bloodbath (UK: Hokushin video title)
Twitch of the Death Nerve (USA)



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BAHIA DE SANGRE

UN FILM DE
MARIO BAVA



JANO.

CLAUDINE AUGER • LUIGI PISTILLI • CLAUDIO VOLONTE'

LAURA BETTI • LEOPOLDO TRIESTE • BRIGITTE SKAY

'Bay of Blood'



'The Black Bolly of the Tarantula'



Belgian video artwork based on a bondage pic of Betty Page from the 1950's

The Last House on the Left - Part II (USA: re-release)

Im Blutrausch des Satans (West Germany)

Antefatto (production title: 'Before the Fact')

Odore di carne (pre-production title: 'Smell of Flesh')

1971 Italy Technicolor scope 85m

Production Company: Nuova Linea Cinematografica

Director: Mario Bava

Producer: Giuseppe Zaccariello

Story: Dardano Sacchetti, Franco Barberi

Script: Mario Bava, Joseph McLee [Giuseppe Zaccariello], Filippo Ottoni, Sergio Canevari

Cinematography: Mario Bava

Editor: Carlo Reali

Art Director: Sergio Canevari

Music: Stelvio Cipriani

Special Effects: Carlo Rambaldi

Assistant Director: Lamberto Bava

Cast: Claudine Auger (*Renata*), Luigi Pistilli (*Albert*), Claudio Volonte [Claudio Camaso]

(*Simon*), Anna Maria Rosati (*Laura*, Ventura's girlfriend), Laura Betti (*Anna Foscatti*, a mystic), Chris Avram (*Frank Ventura*, architect), Brigitte Skay (*Brunhilda*), Isa Miranda (*Countess Federica Donati*), Leopoldo Trieste (*Paolo Foscatti*, an entomologist), Paola Rubens (*Denise*), Guido Boccaccio (*Mike*), Roberto Bonanni (*Bobby*), Giovanni Nuvoletti (*Count Filippo Donati*), Renato Cestie (*young boy*), Nicoletta Elmi (*young girl*).

Wheelchair-bound Countess Donati is sadistically hanged by a male figure. Moments later, her assailant is fatally stabbed. The latter's body is removed from the crime scene, leaving the police to deduce that the Countess committed suicide. Two pleasure-seeking young men bring a couple of attractive female tourists to the bay and the foursome soon indulge in sexual games in the abandoned nightclub by the lakeside. However, after one of the young

women discovers a rotting corpse in the lake, they too become victims. A chain of murder is set in motion with various acquisitive individuals and scheming couples trying to eliminate all those who prevent them from gaining the valuable bay real estate. However, the greed-inspired blood-letting ends even more tragically when some seemingly innocent individuals misinterpret it as a gruesome game...

The obvious influence of Bava's exercise in macabre mayhem on the American slasher genre has been noted many times, so it seems pointless to dwell upon it here. Often disregarded are the wealth of peculiar details which raise this film way above the level of a mere slasher - for example, the obsessive entomologist and his bitchy tarot reading wife, the repulsive sight of an octopus sliding across a corpse and the warped children at the conclusion. The gory proceedings almost become a satire on the avarice which can result when 'centuries of civilisation' are reduced to a dog-eat-dog cycle of murder, but the film's foremost attractions are the thirteen murders which are crammed into its short running time, particularly as several of them are graphic enough to have earned the film 'Nasty' status. The overall impact is considerably enhanced by a cheesy yet seductive score from Stelvio Cipriani (the playful end theme was re-used in the Spanish giallo *A Dragonfly For Each Corpse*).

Video:

Belgium: American Video.

Denmark: label unknown - uncut, letterboxed as **Den Blodige Bugt**.

France: American Video - as **La baie sanglante**; Hollywood Video - as **La baie sanglante**.

Greece: Video Cronos.

Italy: CVR Realvision - as **Reazione a catena**.

Japan: Toho Video - letterboxed as **A Bay of Blood**.

UK: Hokushin - 80m 54s, full screen as **Bloodbath**; Redemption - 80m 35s: cut by 43 seconds, excellent print, letterboxed at 1.66:1 as **A Bay of Blood**.

USA: MPI - uncut as **Twitch of the Death Nerve**; Gorgon Video - uncut as **Twitch of the Death Nerve**.

Soundtrack

Italy: Gatto Nero CD - '*Murder For Pleasure: Giallo and Thriller Themes*' compilation includes the opening and closing themes

Japanese video sleeve



THE BIRD WITH THE CRYSTAL PLUMAGE

L'uccello dalle piume di cristallo
Das Geheimnis der schwarzen handschuhe
(Germany)

L'oiseau au plumage de cristal (France)

De messen morden (Holland)

The Gallery Murders (UK: theatrical title)

Phantom Of Terror (USA)

1969 Italy/West Germany Technostampa

Cromoscope 96m

Production Company: Seda Spettacoli

Rome)/C.C.C. Filmkunst (Berlin)

Director: Dario Argento

Producer: Salvatore Argento

Story and Script: Dario Argento (based loosely

on 'The Screaming Mimi' by Fredric Brown)

Cinematography: Vittorio Storaro

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Art Director and Costumes: Dario Micheli

Music: Ennio Morricone

Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: Roberto Pariente

Cast: Tony Musante (*Sam Dalmas*), Enrico

Maria Salerno (*Inspector Morosini*), Suzy

Kendall (*Giulia*), Eva Renzi (*Monica Ranieri*),

Umberto Raho (*Alberto Ranieri*), Giuseppe

Castellano (*an agent*), Omar Bonaro (*other*

agent), Werner Peters (*antique dealer*), Gianni

Di Benedetto (*Professor Renaldi*), Renato

Romano (*Carlo, Sam's friend*), Reggie Nalder

(*assassin*), Karen Valenti, Annamaria Spogli,

Silvio Di Marco, Pino Patti, Rosita Torosh, Fulvio

Mingozzi, Carla Mancini (*girl in street*), Bruno

Erba, Mario Adorf (*Berto Consalvi*).

While walking home one evening, Sam Dalmas, an American writer living in Rome, witnesses a violent struggle between a young woman and a black-coated figure in an art gallery. Dalmas attempts to intervene but is caught between the gallery's electronically operated glass doors, allowing the black-clad individual to vanish and leaving the woman bleeding from knife wounds. Questioned by the police, the shocked author attempts to recall every detail regarding the incident - which is revealed to be the latest in a number of previously fatal attacks on young women. Convinced that there is an aspect of the crime he cannot recall, Dalmas begins his own investigation - putting himself and his girlfriend Giulia in line as the killer's potential victims...

Following **Blood And Black Lace**, Argento's directorial debut is the second key entry in the development of the *giallo* genre. Although Italian thrillers had already been popularised by the work of Bava, Gastaldi, Lenzi and others, *Bird's* strong box-office showing inspired a



GIANCARLO GIANNINI - CLAUDINE AUGER - BARBARA BOUCHET - ROSSELLA FALK - SILVANO TRANQUILLI

ANNABELLA INCONTRERA - EZIO MARANO - BARBARA BACH E CON STEFANIA SANDRELLI

LA TARANTOLA DAL VENTRE NERO

GIANCARLO PRETE - ANNA SALA

REDAZIONE DI ENNIO MORRICONE

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plethora of productions featuring black-gloved killers slashing their way through increasingly violent scenarios. The opening murder-which isn't-quite-what-it-seems had already been a central conceit in Bava's *Evil Eye* and Giulio Questi's incredible *Death Laid An Egg* (although the latter deliberately obfuscated its thriller elements within an anarchic set-up that left audiences bewildered). However, with *Bird* Argento manages to turn a conventional thriller scenario into a jigsaw for the mind and viewers are inevitably drawn into Dalmas' obsessive

search for the missing piece of the puzzle. Moreover, Argento took the fetishistic imagery from *Blood And Black Lace* and made the connection with death even more overtly sexual. Although perhaps not shocking nowadays, the killer's assaults in *Bird* were explicit at the time and details such as the ripping of a female victim's panties would still pose problems at the BBFC. Despite some minor flaws, such as the farcical scene in which the computer analysis of the suspect's black glove manages to identify approximately 150,000 cigar-smoking

well-dressed, left-handed male suspects in Rome (implying that the police have detailed records of the local population's social habits and choices of attire!), Argento's script is a masterly creation. Furthermore, the undeniable power of its mise-en-scene (especially the art gallery skirmish which can be viewed repeatedly and yet still leave the viewer with a racing pulse) where visual information and style often take precedent over characterisation, would have a lasting effect on spaghetti cinema, prompting the satisfying feeling of watching a film that can only have come from Italy.

Video:

France: SVP, Cinema Conseil.

Germany: Toppic 'Krimi' series - as **Das Geheimnis der Schwarzen Handschuhe**.
Greece: label unknown - full screen, English language, Greek subtitles as **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage**.

Holland: Polygram/Spectrum - 91m, full screen as **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage**.

Italy: Creazioni Home Video - full screen as **L'uccello dalle piume di cristallo**.

Japan: Columbia Video - 96m 07s, letterboxed, in English with Japanese subtitles as **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage**.

UK: Vampix/Videomedia - 92m 10s, slightly cut BBFC 'X' certificate version (the shot of a female victim's panties being ripped is missing), full screen as **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage**; Stablecane - slightly cut BBFC 'X' certificate version with slightly washed out colour transfer as **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage**.

USA: VCI/United - cut US 'PG' version, full screen.

Laserdisc:

Japan: label unknown - letterboxed.

USA: Image Entertainment - cut US 'PG' version, letterboxed at 2:35:1, richer colours than the Japanese disc.

BLACK ANGEL

Arabella l'angelo nero ('Arabella the Black Angel')

1989 Italy Kodak colore Luciano Vittori 92m

Production Company: Arpa International S.r.l.

Director: Max Steel (Stelvio Massi)

Story and Script: R. Filippucci

Cinematography: Stefano Catalano

Editor: Cesare Bianchini

Art Direction: Vittorio Ferrero

Music: Serfran

Assistant Director: Alberto Vari

Cast: Tini Cansino (*Arabella/Deborah Veronese*),

Valentina Visconti (*Gena Fowler, a police*

inspector), Francesco Casale (*Francesco*

J. Veronese/ Frank), Carlo Mucari (*De Rosa*),

Renato D'Amore (*Scognamiglio/Marlowe*), Giose

Davi' (*private detective*), David D'Ingeo (*male*

whore), Rena Niehaus, Evelyn Stewart (Ida

Galli) (*Martha, Francesco's mother*).

Arabella, the wife of Francesco, a crippled writer, visits an S&M brothel which is subsequently raided. Arabella is raped by a vice cop who enjoys it so much he turns up for a second helping, at which point she kills him with a mallet. A private investigator, who took photos of Arabella being violated, is stabbed to death with a pair of scissors by a black-gloved killer. An American guy whom Arabella picks up for sex is also killed and mutilated. Gena Fowler, the police inspector investigating the 'Scissor Crimes' suffers a nightmare in which she is stabbed in the crotch. In a moment of stress, she reveals to her lesbian lover that her mother cut off her father's penis when she was a child. Gena's unscrupulous and ambitious lover/assistant reveals the inspector's lurid past to the press. As a result, Gena is taken off the case while the assistant detective is promptly murdered. Francesco watches Arabella go out for a night of sleaze and stands up, revealing that his disability is a fake. Now a suspect herself, Gena

desperately tries to find the real killer...

Black Angel is firmly aimed at those who like a taste of sleaze with their diet of murder and mayhem, and recalls the delirious depths previously plumbed by **Giallo a Venezia**, another husband and wife scum flick. Stelvio Massi, who made the distasteful **Five Women for the Killer** in 1975, seems happy to wade around in the script's sex and violence. Even the reason for Francesco's apparent disability is suitably vulgar. Via a flashback it is revealed that on the couple's wedding day Arabella was giving him a blow job which caused her new hubby to crash their car! Unfortunately, the film's impact is weakened by Betty Page lookalike Tini Cansino. Despite her obvious enthusiasm, Cansino is an unassured actress (prior to **Black Angel** she was in Joe D'Amato's useless sex comedy **Delizia**). Had this film been made in the early Seventies, Tini's role would have been played by an actress like Evelyn Stewart, or better still Rosalba Neri, who could convince as well as entice. On an upbeat note, the tacky synth score is a guilty pleasure.

Video:

Italy: Skorpion Home Video - 85m 10s, full screen as **Arabella l'angelo nero**.

Japan: Penthouse Video/JAVN - 88m 52s, full screen, English language, Japanese subtitles, pubes digitally censored as **Black Angel**.

THE BLACK BELLY OF THE TARANTULA

La tarantola dal ventre nero

La tarentule au ventre noir (France)

Nalemorderen (Denmark: 'The Needle Murderer')

Der Schwarze Leib der Tarantel (Germany)

La tarantula del vientro negro (Spain)

De Zwarte spin (?)

Giancarlo Giannini finds another victim in 'The Black Belly of the Tarantula'



1971 Italy/France Eastmancolor S.P.E.S. 98m
 Production Company: Da Ma Produzione
 (Rome)/P.A.C. (Paris)
 Director: Paolo Cavara
 Producer: Marcello Danon
 Story: Marcello Danon
 Script: Lucile Laks
 Cinematography: Marcello Gatti
 Editor: Mario Morra
 Art Director: Piero Poletto
 Music: Ennio Morricone
 Music Director: Bruno Nicolai
 Assistant Director: Fabrizio Castellani
 Cast: Giancarlo Giannini (*Inspector Tellini*),
 Claudine Auger (*Laura*), Barbara Bouchet
 (*Maria Zani*), Barbara Bach (*Jenny*), Stefania
 Sandrelli (*Anna Tellini*), Rosella Falk (*woman*
with mole), Ezio Marano (*masseur*), Annabella
 Incontrera (*Mirta*), Silvano Tranquilli (*Paolo*
Zani), Giancarlo Prete (*Mario*), Ana Saia, Walter
 Eugene (*Ginetto, a waiter at the health salon*),
 Nino Vingelli, Daniele Dublino, Giuseppe Fortis,
 Guerrino Crivello, Fulvio Mingozzi, Giorgio
 Dolfin, Carla Mancini.

Paolo Zani discovers that his attractive wife
 Maria is being blackmailed over a salacious
 photo which reveals her extra-marital activities.
 Maria, a client at an exclusive health salon in
 Rome, is murdered that evening, while another
 female client of the salon is killed soon after.
 Inspector Tellini discovers that the murder
 method is similar to that used by a particular
 species of wasp which paralyses tarantula spi-
 ders before ripping open their stomachs.
 Meanwhile, Maria's husband, Paolo, undertakes
 his own investigation but is killed in a rooftop
 fall. The killer strikes back: a woman who
 has been questioned by the police is murdered,
 the inspector is nearly killed by a lorry carrying
 metal poles which reverses into his car and
 finally, his wife, is attacked...

The common *giallo* themes of sexual indiscre-
 tions and blackmail form the backbone of this
 effort, which begins memorably: a tan-
 tringly erotic sequence shows a naked
 Barbara Bouchet being massaged, and minutes
 later she is graphically butchered wearing a yel-
 low *giallo* nightgown. From this strong
 opening, writers Marcello Danon and Lucile
 Laks have a well-paced plot. Director Cavara
 brings to his obvious role models by
 showing shots of the killer removing his dead-
 end from a red-lined box (*The Bird with*
the Crystal Plumage) and a sequence where
 the second victim is killed amidst fashion bou-
 tique dummies (*Blood and Black Lace*,
Smash for the Honeymoon). Furthermore,
 the killer's use of surgical rubber gloves - rather
 than the standard black leather ones - adds a
 clinical, slightly creepy edge to the proceed-
 ings. Other seemingly unimportant details -
 such as when the killer spies on the police
 inspector and his wife making love (also in *My*
Dear Killer), and the stray cat which they
 bring into their apartment, are later shown to
 be important. Admirers of Euro starlets are well
 catered by the cast of lovely ladies who provide
 the film's victims - as in the following year's
So Sweet, So Dead, the women's indulgence
 in sexual shenanigans results in the ultimate
 punishment. Dubious sexual politics aside, the
 film's mood is heightened by some fabulous
 interior decors and Morricone's sumptuous
 score. The mixture of captivating themes laced
 with the delicious vocals of Edda Del Orso and
 the elegant motifs he provided for many
 years. For most of the film, Giancarlo Giannini,
 as *Inspector Tellini*, gives an understated performance
 which is contrasted effectively with his utter
 rage and anger when the killer places his
 wife in danger. Former mondo film
 director Cavara later directed the well-regarded
My Dear Killer.

Director: Paolo Cavara
 Cast: Giancarlo Giannini, Claudine Auger, Barbara Bouchet,
 Barbara Bach, Stefania Sandrelli, Rosella Falk, Ezio Marano,
 Annabella Incontrera, Silvano Tranquilli, Giancarlo Prete,
 Ana Saia, Walter Eugene, Nino Vingelli, Daniele Dublino,
 Giuseppe Fortis, Guerrino Crivello, Fulvio Mingozzi, Giorgio
 Dolfin, Carla Mancini.
 Search of Miami - bootleg subtitled
 an inferior quality source tape.



Soundtrack:
 Italy: Cerebus LP; CAM CD - on a double-bill
 with *I malamondo*.

A BLACK VEIL FOR LISA

La morte non ha sesso ('Death has no Sex')
Showdown (alternate English language title)
Le tueur frappe trois fois (France)
Das geheimnis der jungen witwen
 (Germany)
La muerte no tiene sexo (Spain and
 Argentina)
 1968 Italy/Germany Eastmancolor 95m
 Production Company: Filmes Cinematografica
 (Rome)/Pan Film (Dusseldorf)/Top Film (Munich)
 Director: Massimo Dallamano
 Story: Giuseppe Belli
 Script: Giuseppe Belli, Vittoriano Petrilli,

Massimo Dallamano, Audrey Nohra
 Cinematography: Angelo Lotti
 Editor: Daniele Alabiso
 Art Director: Hans Hutter
 Music: Gianfranco Reverberi
 Music Director: Giampiero Reverberi
 Assistant Director: Monica Felt (Venturini)
 Cast: John Mills (*Inspector Franz Bulov*),
 Luciana Paluzzi (*Lisa Bulov*), Robert Hoffman
 (*Max Lindt alias Hans Schmidt*), Renata Kasche,
 Tullio Altamura, Carlo Hintermann, Enzo
 Fiermonte, Loris Bazzocchi, Giuseppe
 Terranova, Rodolfo Licari, Bernardino Solitari,
 Vanna Polverosi, Robert Van Daalen, Carlo
 Spadoni, Jimmy the Phenomenal (Origene
 Sofrano), Paola Natale, Mirella Panphili.

Inspector Bulov works for the Narcotics division
 of Interpol, and his investigations into drug traf-
 ficking in Hamburg are being seriously under-
 mined because his informants are being



Greek video sleeve for 'A Blade in the Dark'

'silenced' by a professional killer. Although under pressure from his superiors to get results, the ageing Bulov is having trouble concentrating on his job - he is obsessed with the idea that Lisa, his attractive young wife, is having an affair. The beleaguered inspector becomes increasingly paranoid and convinces himself that Lisa has a lover. In the meantime, Bulov manages to catch the hitman (Max Lindt) and, in a moment of insane jealousy, black-mails him into killing his wife. However, instead of dispatching Lisa, Max is soon bedding her, quickly finding himself (like Bulov) becoming obsessed by her female charms, and a cat and mouse game develops between the inspector and the killer...

Black Veil probably contains too much police procedure for most *giallo* fans but the clever twists make for a surprisingly gripping addition to the genre. The plot follows a winding path through the gamut of human emotions (love, jealousy, greed, vengeance, lust) until its ironic conclusion. As in other *gialli*, seemingly unimportant details - such as a red Porsche and the yellow tulips which feature throughout the film

- are later shown to have greater significance. Moreover, the interplay between the cold-blooded killer and the increasingly irrational authority figure is engrossing. Perhaps reflecting the male-dominated script team, Paluzzi's pivotal character is not as strongly defined as it could be. John Mills might not be everyone's choice for the role of the tormented inspector but he's surprisingly effective and adds a touch of class to the production. Director Dallamano captures the seediness of Sixties Hamburg and would go on to carve a particular niche in the *giallo* genre with his schoolgirls-in-peril trilogy (...*Solange*, ...*Daughters* and *Rings Of Fear*)

Notes: The most commonly seen version, which was released theatrically in the USA with an 'R' rating, replaces Gianfranco Reverberi's score with music by Richard Markowitz and shortens the ending.

Video:

Germany: label unknown.

Italy: Creazioni Home Video - 91m 01s, full screen as **La morte non ha sesso**.

UK: Diplomat - 84m 11s (US 'R' rated version), full screen as **A Black Veil For Lisa**.

A BLADE IN THE DARK

La casa con la scala nel buio ('The House with the Dark Staircase')

La maison de la terreur (France)

Plus tranchant qu'une lame! (France: alternate title?)

Cuchillos en la oscuridad (Spain)

1983 Italy colore LV (Luciano Vittori) scope 96m

Production Company: National

Cinematografica/Nuova Dania Cinematografica

Director: Lamberto Bava

Story and Script: Elisa Briganti, Dardano Sacchetti

Cinematography and Camera: Gianlorenzo Battaglia

Editor: Lamberto Bava

Music: Guido and Maurizio De Angelis

Special Effects: Corridori Giovanni

Assistant Director: Michele Soavi

Cast: Andrea Occhipinti (*Bruno*), Anny Papa, Fabiola Toledo (*Sandra, a film director*), Michele Soavi (*Tony*), Stanko Molnar (*Giovanni, the handyman*), Valeria Cavalli, Irene Groschke, Lara Naszinski (*Giulia, Bruno's girlfriend*). uncredited cast: Giovanni Frezza (*young boy in film clip*), Lamberto Bava (*director at editing suite*).

Bruno, a musician, is hired to compose the score for a horror thriller and arranges to spend a month in a spacious, isolated villa so he can concentrate on his work. Katia, a flirtatious neighbour pops out of a cupboard (literally) and is later killed. Meanwhile, Bruno is perplexed by the whispering voice he hears on his taping equipment. Giulia, Bruno's actress girl-





friend, turns up and jealously dismisses his concerns. Tony, the landlord, drops by to check on the strange smell emanating from the swimming pool and informs Bruno that he is going to Kuwait. Angela, Katia's friend, turns up looking for her flatmate. Later, in Bruno's bathroom, she is viciously murdered by a woman. Sandra, the horror film's director, stops by to check on the composer's progress. She and Bruno are shocked to discover that Linda, a former friend of Sandra's and the subject of the movie, was a former tenant. Linda becomes the main suspect as the killings continue...

Nearly influenced by the previous year's *Tenebrae*, on which Bava was assistant director, *A Blade in the Dark* is a textbook example of how to make an effective *giallo* on a fairly limited budget - nearly all of the film is set in and around the villa where Bruno is attempting to compose his score. Brushing aside the women-as-victims debate in Argento's aforementioned post-modern *giallo*, *Blade* takes

great pleasure in presenting the violent deaths of various attractive cast members. The murders, carried out with a razor sharp craft knife (which at times seems as disembodied as the deadly weapon in *Shock*), are all shot from the killer's point-of-view, and are suitably nasty. The sparse, but highly effective electronic score by Guido and Maurizio De Angelis will stick in your head - especially if you have had the misfortune to see *Delitti* in which it is re-cycled - as will the infuriating refrain 'You're a female, you're a female!' The film-within-a-film neatly explores the thin line between fantasy cinema and reality, while the composer scoring a horror-thriller recalls Anthony Steffen's character in *The Crimes of the Black Cat*. Certain stylistic devices, such as Katia's body being dragged along by the killer, also allow Bava to make reference to his father's work (in this case, *Blood and Black Lace*). None of Bava's subsequent *gialli* ever achieved the intensity of this excellent low budget bloodbath.

A double-bill for the British cinema release of *Blood and Black Lace*



Video:

Australia: Vestron - 92m 28s: uncut as *A Blade in the Dark*.

Belgium: VDS Editions - English language version: approx. 92m: the scene where Naszinsk hides in the closet is shorter, letterboxed; VDS - French version: 92m: uncut, letterboxed.

France: Fantastic/GCR; Rene Chateau.

Germany: USA Video - full screen, excellent quality.

Greece: Joconda Video - 92m 15s, full screen, Greek subtitles, washed out colours as *A Blade in the Dark*.

Holland: VDS Editions - Dutch subtitles as *A Blade in the Dark*.

Italy: Avo Film - uncut, letterboxed as *La casa con la scala nel buio*.

Japan: label unknown - approx. 96m, letterboxed.

UK: Vestron - 90m 40s: cut by 1m 50s as *A Blade in the Dark*.

USA: Lightning Video - as *A Blade in the Dark*.

BLOOD AND BLACK LACE

Sei donne per l'assassino ('Six Women for the Killer')

6 femmes per l'assassin (France)

Assassinats dans la haute couture (France: video re-title 'Murders in the Fashion Industry')

Blutige siede (Germany) 'Six women for the Murderer'

L'atelier de la mort (France: production title)

1964 Italy/France/West Germany Eastmancolor scope 86m

Production Company: Emmepi Cinematografica (Rome)/Productions Georges De Beauregard (Paris)/Top Film (Munich)

Director: Mario Bava

Producer: Massimo Patrizi, Alfredo Mirabile

Story and Script: Marcello Fondato

Script Collaborators: Mario Bava, Giuseppe Barilla

Cinematography: Ubaldo Terzano

Editor: Mario Serandrei

Art Director: Arrigo Breschi

Music: Carlo Rustichelli

Assistant Director: Priscilla Contardi

Cast: Eva Bartok (*Countess Cristiana*), Cameron Mitchell (*Massimo Morlacchi*), Dante Di Paolo (*Franco Scala, the antiquarian*), Thomas Reiner (*Inspector Silvestri*), Claude Dantes (*Greta*), Harriet White (Medin) (*Clarice*), Mary Arden (*Peggy*), Arian Gorin (Arianna Gorini) (*Nicole*), Claude Dantes (*Tao-Li*), Frank Russel (Franco Ressel) (*Marquis Riccardo Morelli*), Louis Pigot (Luciano Pigozzi) (*Cesare Lazzarini*), Lea Kruger (*Greta*), Massimo Righi (*Marco*), Giuliano Raffaelli (*Inspector Silvestri's assistant*), Mara Carmosino, Francesca Ungaro (*Isabella*), Enzo Cerusio (*garage attendant*), Nadia Anty, Heidi Stroh.

A dark, windy night. Isabella, a model, is murdered by a masked killer in the grounds of an exclusive fashion house. Nicole, another model, discovers Isabella's diary - which reveals the indiscretions of some of the fashion house employees and hangers-on. Nicole is soon murdered, having been stalked and viciously smashed in the face by the killer. After stealing and burning the diary, Peggy is subjected to a savage beating by the killer. Nicole's naked, mutilated corpse is discovered in an antique shop, prompting Inspector Silvestri to round up five male suspects. That night, Greta discovers Peggy's body in the boot of her car and is subsequently suffocated to death by a masked figure. The men held by the police are released as all had a foolproof alibi, having been incarcerated at the time of the latest murder. The killing continues until its tragic conclusion...

Blood and Black Lace is undoubtedly the most important film in this book, hence the publishers' desire to name-check it on the cover. The faintly ridiculous and mechanical plot, the unbelievably slim motivations for committing homicide and, perhaps most significantly, the emphasis on stylishly filmed, overtly sadistic, methods of murder seem to encapsulate the very essence of what most people



define as *giallo* cinema (even though, as this book illustrates, there are other types of thrillers which form part of the genre). Anticipating later *gialli*, and in particular the films of Argento, the mysterious killer seems almost inhuman, an apparition who is able to appear and disappear. There are some superbly staged kill sequences, notably the cat and mouse chase in the antique showroom which is illuminated by the various coloured lights emanating from neon signs (an effect often repeated but never bettered). Moreover, Bava incorporates seemingly unimportant details into the mise-en-scene - such as the incessantly creaking, and loosely hanging fashion house sign - which have a distinct artistic resonance reaching beyond the story structure (the swinging sign provides a neat circular link with the dangling telephone at the film's conclusion). Needless to say, Carlo Rustichelli's stirring score is a classic of its kind, complimenting the visuals perfectly. Those with a taste for trivia may want to note that the European version opens with gorgeously lit 'poses' by each of the lead characters against the backdrop of the fashion house. For the US release, supervised by Lou Moss, more macabre (and tackier) opening credits, featuring skeletons highlighted in primary colours, were used.

Video:

France: Clones Video, Columbus Video - as **Assassinats dans la haute couture**; Fil a Film - 84m 45s as **6 femmes pour l'assassin**.
Germany: label unknown.
Greece: label unknown.
Japan: Toshiba as Six Women for the Murderer - letterboxed.
UK: Iver Film Services - 79m 48s, US version; Revolution - 78m 51s: cut with a BBFC '15' certificate, letterboxed, washed out colour, US version.
USA: Media Home Entertainment - US version; Sinister Cinema - US version; Rolling Thunder - uncut, letterboxed, subtitled (announced).

Laserdisc:

France: Polygram Video/Mangue Pistache, Mario Bava Collection - excellent quality, letterboxed at 1:75:1 as **6 femmes pour l'assassin**.
Japan: Toshiba - letterboxed, part of Claude Dantes' bathtub murder is missing.
USA: Roan Group.

DVD:

USA: Rolling Thunder - uncut, letterboxed, subtitled (announced)

Spanish artwork for 'The Bloodstained Butterfly'

BLOOD LINK

The Link

Extrasensorial (Italy)

1983 Germany Technicolor 97m

Production Company: Zadar Filmgesellschaft m.b.H.

Director: Albert [Alberto] De Martino

Producer: Robert Palaggi

Story: Max [Massimo] De Rita, Albert [Alberto] De Martino

Script: Theodore Epstein

Cinematography: Romano Albani

Editor: Russel Lloyd

Art Director: Uberto Bertacca

Music and Music Director: Ennio Morricone

Assistant Director: Vivalda Vigorelli

Cast: Michael Moriarty (*Doctor Craig Manning and Keith Manning/Thomason*), Penelope Milford (*Doctor Julie Warren*), Cameron Mitchell (*Bud Waldo*), Sarah Langenfeld (*Christine, Waldo's daughter*), Martha Smith (*Hedwig*), Virginia McKenna (*woman in ballroom*), Reinhold K. Olszewski (*Inspector Hessinger*), Geraldine Fitzgerald (*Mrs Thomason*), Henriette Gonnerman (*woman tourist*), Vonne Sherman (*Millie*), Peter Mannering (*Bill*), Yael Forti (*woman in bell tower*).

In Hamburg, Keith Manning, a psychopath, preys upon lonely middle-aged women and prostitutes. Meanwhile, in the USA, his siamese

twin, Doctor Craig Manning, begins to share the extra-sensory experience of his brother's murderous activities and, becoming increasingly alarmed, travels to Hamburg. Realising that his 'sane' brother is in Germany, Keith sets him up by revealing his whereabouts to Christine, the daughter of an aged prize-fighter he has just sadistically pummelled to death. Having initially attempted to kill the good doctor, Christine is soon attracted to him and they end up in bed together. Psycho Keith turns up, sedates his twin and attempts to rape Christina, but his impotence leads him to kill her instead. Craig is shocked to discover Christina's blood-spattered body and the police at the door. While his innocent twin languishes in jail, Keith then kills a prostitute. And when Craig's lover, Julie, arrives from the States, little does she know what is in store when she arranges to meet his terrible twin face to face...

The notion of being able to 'see' the actions of a killer had already been explored in the lifeless designer murder mystery **The Eyes of Laura Mars** (1978). **Blood Link** takes this notion a step further by having the psychic bond between siamese twins (the theme would be reworked in **Nothing Underneath** where a brother and sister share an extra-sensory connection). Michael Moriarty (a regular in Larry Cohen's idiosyncratic films) is excellent in both roles, whether looking slightly bemused as Craig or in full rant as Keith, while the fact that the 'good' twin, Craig, is no angel ('I'm a louse'



he freely admits to his devoted lover and later cheats on her without a second thought) helps to make the premise more believable. Moriarty is ably supported by a convincing cast, especially Penelope Milford who is required to deal with sexual abuse from both twins. It's also a pleasant change to see **Blood And Black Lace** star Cameron Mitchell in an Eighties film where he does more than walk on, mumble a few lines and then collect a pay cheque. His rather pathetic death, at the hands (actually fists) of sadist Keith, is one of the film's most potent moments. This is another film which uncomfortably explores the equation between impotence and the desire to kill and those seeking well-presented sleazy thrills will not be disappointed. Although paid for by a German production company, in creative terms this is ostensibly an Italo-German co-production.

Video:

Holland: CNR Video - 93m 53s, full screen, good quality as **Blood Link**.

Italy: label unknown - as **Extrasensorial**.

Japan: Toshiba - as **Blood Link**.

Sweden: Virgin Home Video - 93m 53s, full screen as **Blood Link**.

UK: Medusa - cut by 22 seconds as **The Link**.

JSA: Embassy - as **Blood Link**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Beat CD - on a double-bill with **Un esercito di 5 uomini**; ViVimusica CD - 'Ennio Morricone Film Music' compilation features title theme.

THE BLOODSTAINED BUTTERFLY

Una farfalla con le ali insanguinate ('The Butterfly with Bloodstained Wings')

Bloody Butterfly

Cran d'arret (Belgium)

Stutspur im Park (Germany)

Una mariposa con las alas ensangrentadas

Italy Technicolor Techniscope 97m
Production Company: Filmes Cinematografica
Director: Duccio Tessari
Cinematographer: Gianfranco Clerici
Screenplay: Gianfranco Clerici, Duccio Tessari
Photography: Carlo Carlini
Editor: Gian Maria Messeri
Director of Music: Giacomo Calò
Music: Gianni Ferrio with extracts by Tchaikovsky
Costume Designer: Helmut Berger (*Giorgio, a pianist*),
Production Designer: Sbragia (*Alessandro Marchi*), Evelyn



Stewart (Ida Galli) (*Maria*), Silvano Tranquilli (*Inspector Berardi*), Wendy D'Olive (*Sarah Marchi*), Gunther M. Stoll (*Giulio Codrero, a lawyer*), Carol And (*Carole André*) (*Françoise Pigaut*), Anna Zinnemann, Lorella de Luca (*Marta Clerici*), Stefano Oppedisano, Dana Ghia (*Diamante, Giorgio's mother*), Wolfgang Preiss (*Eriprando Villarosa Venosta, Giorgio's father*), Federica Tessari (*Federica*), Peter Sheperd, Gabriella Venditti.

Françoise Pigaut, an attractive French student, is stabbed to death in a park during a heavy rainstorm. As the killer rushes out of the park he is seen by several witnesses. Analysis of the crime scene, combined with the testimony of witnesses, leads the police to arrest Alessandro Marchi, a TV sports presenter. Marchi is unaware that his wife Maria and his lawyer, Giulio Codrero, are having an affair and therefore quite content to see him put away behind bars. Unsurprisingly, his defence at the subse-

quent trial proves to be a weak affair and he is duly incarcerated. However, further murders are soon committed in the same park and so the authorities reluctantly release him...

Duccio Tessari's previous *giallo* was the rather downbeat **Death Occurred Last Night**, but with this sanguine story the veteran director excelled himself. Filmed in the manner of a classic detective tale, with flashbacks revealing more and more about the past and present, the clever narrative is expertly told and is complemented by some beautifully composed scope visuals: the half-glimpsed murder in the rain-soaked park and shots of the killer's frantic get-away exemplify pure *giallo* cinema. Although the criminal investigation and subsequent trial are integral to the plot, they never swamp it which will come as a relief to those *giallo* aficionados who tire of endless police proceedings. Furthermore, **Butterfly** has one of the best aural introductions in Italian cinema. It opens, chrysalis-like, with Tchaikovsky's jarring Thematic Concerto No.1 for Piano before sud-

senly, and without hesitation, evolving into a slightly jazzy easy tempo refrain which enters into your consciousness. It's a shame that excellent thrillers like this and **The Black Belly of the Tarantula** have so far remained unavailable in English language video versions. However even in Italian, this is one **Butterfly** you should make the effort to catch

Video:

Belgium and France: Jet Video - 84m 37s, letterboxed as **Cran d'arret**.

Germany: Eurovideo - 94m 46s, letterboxed as **Blutspur im Park**.

Italy: Creazioni; Mondadori Video - 93m 41s, partially letterboxed (the credits are still illegible) as **Una farfalla con le ali insanguinate**.

Soundtrack

Italy: Gatto Nero CD - 'Murder For Pleasure: Giallo and Thriller Themes' compilation - title theme only; Right Tempo CD - full score

THE BLOODSTAINED SHADOW

Solamente nero ('Only Blackness')

Blutiger Schatten (Germany)

Sombra sangrienta (Spain)

Den Blodbestankta Skugan (Sweden: video sleeve title)

Bloodstained Shadow (UK: Diplomat video sleeve title)

Dietro l'angolo il terrore (pre-production title: 'Terror Behind the Corner')

1978 Italy Kodak Technospes 106m

Production Company: P.A.C. Produzioni Atlas Consortziate S.r.l.

Director: Antonio Bido

Story: Antonio Bido, Domenico Malan

Script: Antonio Bido, Marisa Andalo', Domenico Malan

Cinematography: Mario Vulpiani

Editor: Amedeo Giomini

Art Director and Costumes: Carlo Leva

Music: Stelvio Cipriani

Assistant Director: Ervino Wetzl

Cast: Lino Capolicchio (*Stefano D'Arcangeli*),

Stefania Casini (*Sandra Sellani*), Craig Hill (*Don*

Paolo, *Stefano's brother*), Attilio Duse Sciascia

(*Doctor Aloisi*), Massimo Serato (*Count*

Pedrazzi), Laura Nucci (*seamstress*), Juliette

Meyniel (*Signora Nardi*), Gianfranco Bullo,

Luigi Casellato, Alfredo Zammi, Alina Simoni,

Emilio Delle Piane, Sonia Viviani, Sergio Mioni

A schoolgirl is strangled to death in a meadow by a mysterious killer who is never caught.

Years later, a university student called Stefano returns to the small Venetian island where he

grew up. Don Paolo, Stefano's brother and the local priest, derides a group of apparently immoral people - including a fake medium, a rich doctor addicted to gambling, an illegal abortionist and an openly paedophilic homosexual atheist - who indulge in seances. One by one, the 'sinners' are killed and, when he begins to receive threatening letters, it seems that Paolo - who experiences extra-sensory 'visions' - will be the next victim...

A considerable improvement on **The Cat's Victims**, director Bido's previous stab at the giallo genre, **The Bloodstained Shadow** has a satisfyingly labyrinthine plot, plenty of shock cuts and some well-orchestrated murder scenes (especially the demise of the medium during a thunderstorm). Bido again takes his cue from Argento (a child-like painting holds the clue to the killer's identity, while Cipriani's excellent score imitates Goblin's **Suspiria** score), Pupi Avati (the casting of Lino Capolicchio, the lead from **La casa dalle finestre che ridono**), and Fulci (echoes of **Don't Torture a Duckling**), but originality has never been the main point of Italian thrillers. The director makes excellent use of the winding passages and narrow waterways on the Venetian island of Murano to add to the atmosphere.

Video:

Australia: THG/CIC Taft - 104m 15s as **The Bloodstained Shadow**.

Italy: Linea Film; Star - 104m 17s.

Sweden: Hem Video - uncut, letterboxed with

sleeve title **Den Blodbestnkta Skuggan**.

UK: Diplomat - 104m 20s, re-edited opening

credits, full screen as **The Bloodstained**

Shadow with sleeve title **Bloodstained**

Shadow; Redemption - 104m 05s, letterboxed as **The Bloodstained Shadow**.

Soundtrack:

Germany: Lucertola Media CD - thirty-five short tracks. The sleeve notes include an extract of an interview with Antonio Bido.

THE BLOODSUCKER LEADS THE DANCE

La sanguisuga conduce la danza

Il marchio di Satana (Italy: video title 'The Mark of Satan')

L'Insatiable Samantha (La sangsue) (France)

Danza macabra (Spain)

The Passion Of Evelyn (USA: video title)

1975 Italy Technicolor 88m

Production Company: To. Ro. Cinematografica

Director: Alfredo Rizzo

Story and Script: Alfredo Rizzo

Cinematography: Aldo Greci

Editor: Piero Bruni, Gianfranco Simoncelli, Vanni Castellani

Music: Marcello Giombini

Cast: Femi Benussi (*Sybilla*), Patrizia De Rossi

(*Evelyn*), Giacomo Rossi Stuart (*Count Marnak*),

Krista Nell, Luciano Pigozzi, Barbara Marzano,

Mario Derosa, Marzia Damon, Lidia Olizzi,

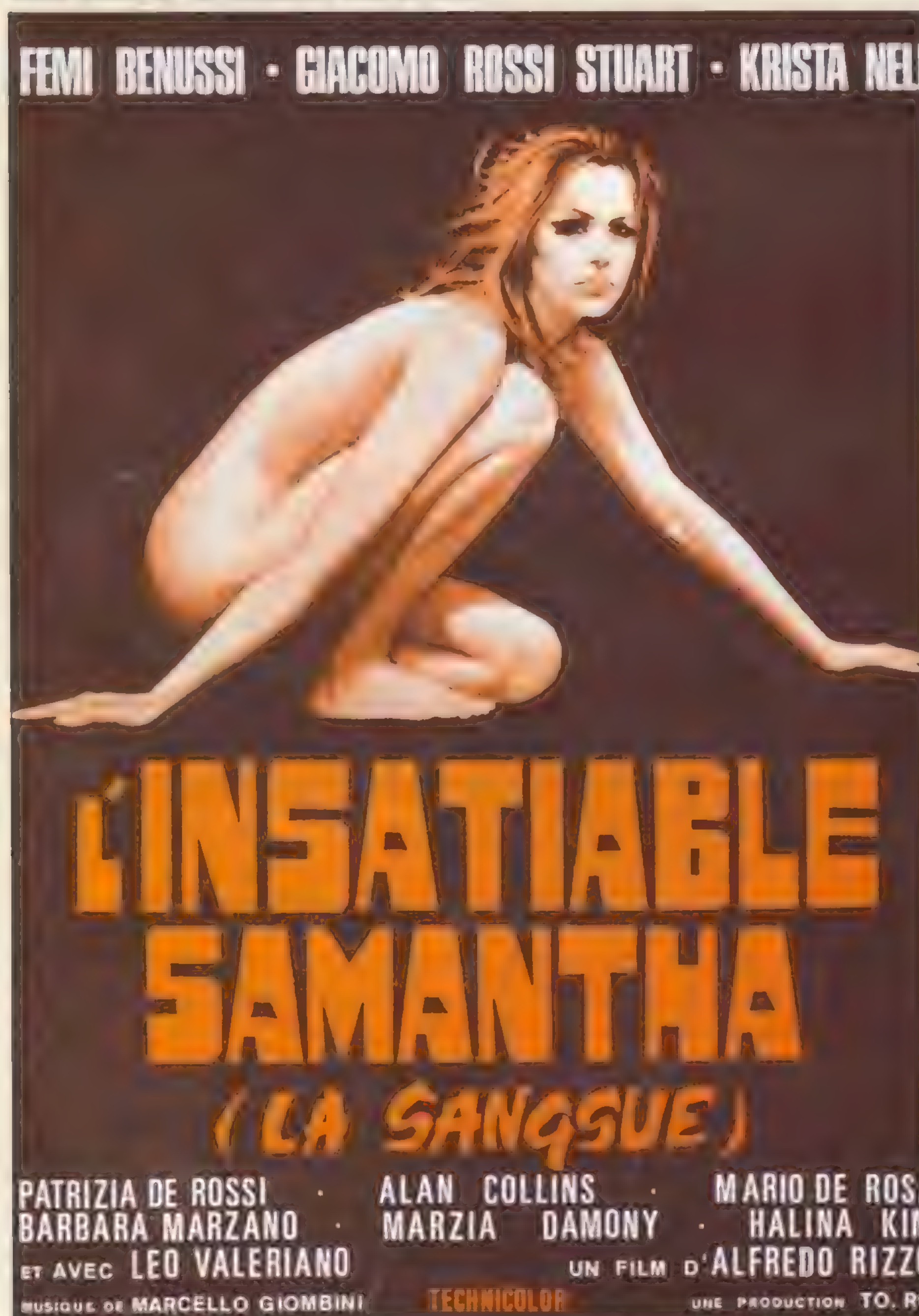
Susette Nadalutti, Pier Paola Succi, Leo

Valeriano, Rita Sylva, Halina Kim.

Ireland 1902: Count Marnak invites a small travelling theatre company to his isolated castle, which is situated on an island. The Count is stunned to find that Evelyn, the beautiful lead actress, bears an uncanny resemblance to his dead wife. They soon begin an affair but their lovemaking is curtailed by a series of grisly killings in which all the victims are decapitated. At first it appears that an ancient family curse is coming true. But it transpires that the deaths are the work of an unbalanced individual...

A horror/giallo/exploitation hybrid, with an emphasis on the latter (most of the female cast bare their breasts), **The Bloodsucker** is an amusing attempt to return to the spirit of Sixties Gothics. Although the title implies that a vampire may be lurking in the film's castle (and yes, it's the same castle that has featured so often in Italian productions), the traditional dénouement reveals the murderer to be a mentally insane mortal with an uncontrollable urge to kill. Former actor Alfredo Rizzo's perfunctory

French artwork for 'The Bloodsucker leads the Dance'



plot is designed to allow as much titillation as possible, including the obligatory lesbian grappling, before the terror begins and heads begin to roll. Rizzo directs competently but he is no Bava or even Margheriti and this is an undistinguished, if enjoyably lurid, entry.

Video:

Australia: label unknown.

Belgium/Luxemburg: Videobox - 80m 46s, French language, letterboxed, jumpy print.

France: Videobox; Iris Television - letterboxed as **L'Insatiable Samantha**.

Greece: Videosonic; Cinehollywood/Videoteca Studio - 84m 57s, letterboxed, English language as **The Bloodsucker Leads the Dance**; label unknown - includes hardcore inserts.

Italy: Cinehollywood, Antonianna Home Video - 84m 50s, full screen as **Il marchio di Satana**.

USA: Private Screenings - as **The Passion of Evelyn**.

BLOW-UP

1966 Italy/United Kingdom Metrocolor Eastmancolor 111m

Production Company: Carlo Ponti (Rome)/Bridge Film (London)

Director: Michelangelo Antonioni

Story: Michelangelo Antonioni, based on 'La pava del diavolo' by Julio Cortazar

Script: Michelangelo Antonioni, Tonino Guerra

D cinematography: Carlo Di Palma

Editor: Frank Clarke

Art Director: Assheton Gordon

Music: Herbie Hancock

Cast: David Hemmings (*Thomas*), Vanessa Redgrave (*Jane*), Peter Bowles (*Ron*), Sara Miles (*Patricia*), John Castle (*painter*), Jane Fonda, Gillian Hills (*two aspiring models*), Harry Hutchinson (*assistant in antique shop*), Veruschka (*first model*), Peggy Moffitt, Jill Bennett, Rosaleen Murphy, Ann Norman, Valerie Hampshire (*model*), Ronald O'Casey (*Jane's lover*), Reg Wilkins (*Thomas' assistant*), Chin Chin (*Thomas' employee*), Mary Khal (*journalist*), Susan Broderick (*antique shop owner*), The Yardbirds (*themselves*).

He out taking random shots in a park, Thomas, a successful photographer, captures a page of what he thinks is evidence of a murder. He enlarges the image many times and eventually discovers a body...

Antonioni captures the liberal atmosphere of swinging London in a way that inspired many other film-makers to locate their stories in the English capital. Looking back on this quintessential product of the Sixties it's easy to scoff at

the seemingly ephemeral segments: the street demonstration, the extended photo shoot, the time with two aspiring models, and Hemmings' presence at a Yardbirds gig (complete with Who-inspired instrument trashing).

As with all of Antonioni's work, the details are as important as the admitted inconclusive plot. Just as some film-makers are able to make fasci-

ng films in which almost nothing seems to happen, Antonioni develops an intriguing picture from disparate elements of an arrogant photographer's daily existence. My only

reservation about **Blow-Up** is the presence of annoying mime artists at its conclusion. More an unconventional narrative (in contrast most *gialli* storylines are overtly contrived

with many loose ends to be resolved at the conclusion), the influence of Antonioni's master south story on Argento's canon (particularly **Deep Red**) is obvious, whilst Brian De Palma heavily reworked the central idea in **Blow Out**.

Video: MGM/UA.

Audio: Stereo.

Format: VHS - full screen; Warner Home Video

Release: 1995

Country: USA

Language: English

Runtime: 111m

Soundtrack: Original score with 13 tracks; CDs in various

Formats



BODY COUNT

Camping del terrore ('Camping Terror')

Body Count - Die Mathematik des

Schreckens (Germany: video sleeve title) Shamen (Denmark)

1986 Italy colore LV (Luciano Vittori) 87m

Production Company: Racing Pictures

Director: Ruggero Deodato

Producer: Alessandro Fracassi

Story: Alex Capone

Script: Alex Capone, David Parker Jr., Sheila

Goldberg, Luca D'Alisera

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Cinematography: Emilio Loffredo

Music: Claudio Simonetti

Special Effects: Roberto Pace

Assistant Director: Alberto Acciarito

Cast: Bruce Penhall, David A. Hess, Luisa

Maneri, Nicola Farron, Andrew Lederer, Stefano

Madia, John Steiner, Nancy Brill, Cynthia

Thompson, Valentina Forte, Ivan Rassimov,

Elena Pompei, Charles Napier (*police sheriff*), Sven Kruger, Lorenzo Grabau, Stefano Galantucci, Clelia (sic) Fradella, Fabio Vox. Uncredited Cast: Mimsy Farmer.

A group of moronic teenagers go camping at a site long abandoned due to a murder which happened there years before. And of course, it's not long before the killings continue...

Body Count is a deliberate (and curiously late attempt to slavishly imitate American stalk 'n slashers, even down to the uninspiring export title which is filched from the ad-lines for **Friday the 13th Part 2**. Sadly, a great cast of Italian exploitation regulars go to waste in a cynical production which should never have been made (Deodato has confirmed that he agrees with this view!). The pulse-racing score by Claudio Simonetti is the only contribution which is typically Italian and is the one feature of the film everyone seems to applaud. Sadly incurring the wrath of slasher movie fans



La brigada del inspector Bogart



ROBERT SACCH

CON BARBARA BOUCHET · ANITA EKBERG · ROSALBA NERI · EVELYN KRAFT
HOWARD VERNON · PETER MARTELL · DIRIGIDA POR F.L. MORRIS · EASTMANCOLOR

everywhere it should be noted that while this reviewer enjoys mindless mayhem as much as the next Jason Vorhees, **Body Count** is a particularly weak entry into an already overcrowded genre. We have come to expect more from the film-makers who, let's face it, kick-started the sub-genre with more sophisticated body counts in films such as **A Bay of Blood** and **Torso**.

Video:

Australia: Palace Home Video - 82m 58s as **Body Count**

France: label unknown.

Germany: label unknown - as Shamen

Holland: International Home Video - 83m 54s, full screen, English language, Dutch subtitles as **Body Count**

Italy: label unknown

Japan: label unknown - approx. 87m

UK: US Showworld - cut by 14 seconds, full screen as **Body Count**

BODY PUZZLE

Mystery (Italy theatrical re-release title)

Corpo sessantasette

La casa d'appuntamento (production title)

Pieces of Abe (English language production title)

1972 Italy colour 81m

Production Company: P.A.C. Produzioni Atlas

Director: Umberto Lenzi

Screenplay: Bava

Story: Teodoro Agnini, Domenico Paolella

Script: Lamberto Bava, Teodoro Agnini, Bruce

Bava

Cinematography: Luigi Kuveiller

Editor: Piero Stizza

Art Director: Davide Bassan

Music: Carlo Maria Cordio

Cast: Joanna Pacula (*Tracy Grant*), Tomas

Arana (*Detective Michele Mike Livett*), Francois

Montagnat (*Abe*), Gianni Garko (*police chief*),

Enza Bianchi (*Enza Bianchi Colombatto*) (*Doctor*

Cori), Muccio Gazzolo (*Gigli*), Susanna Javicoli

(*Sigora Corson*), Bruno Corazzari (*Professor*

Brusco), Ursula von Baechler (*Katia Lelli*),

Simone L. Monaco (*Mort*), Giovanni

Lombardi Radice (*Morangi*), Paolo Baroni

(*Viola*), St. Bernard dog (*Bob*)

A motorcyclist is killed on a rain-soaked road. Someone else, a confectioner is stabbed to death by a killer who listens to classical music on headphones. Meanwhile, Tracy, an attractive woman, is found lying in the remains of her dead husband's car. The killer continues his grim mission: a woman has her left hand hacked off in a public toilet, a lifeguard is stabbed to death in an empty swimming pool, and a female teacher who received Abe's corpse has been graphically removed in front of a class of young school children. It transpires that the body parts donated by Abe are being systematically removed from all those who received them. Detective Mike Levitt also discovers that, unbeknown to Tracy, her deceased partner had a secret sex life. Levitt and the terrified woman begin a relationship which places them both in direct danger from the seemingly unstoppable killer.

Despite a troubled production history and a shaky record for theatrical release, **Body Puzzle** is one of the better horror thrillers to originate from Italy in recent years (although one with a penchant for knife-wielding psychos stalking young women will probably prefer **Black Cat** or **A Blade in the Dark** and **You'll Die at Midnight**). The casting helps: Francois Montagnat is terribly effective as the relentless killer and Tomas Arana is a convincingly cool cop. It's also good to see early Eighties horror film director Umberto Lenzi (aka John Wood) directing it, and genre veterans Enza Bianchi and Enza Bianchi in cameo roles. Even if a standard idea is turned into a solid production backed up by a reasonably effective, atmospheric Carlo Maria Cordio synth score, **Body Puzzle** has the classic theme which the director returns to when attacking his victims, Carl Gustav's 'Furtiva' from 'Carmena Burana' (the

music used in the Old Spice ads) was replaced by Modeste Moussorgsky's equally well-known but less evocative 'Night on Bare Mountain' for most releases due to copyright problems.

Video:

Italy: label unknown.

Japan: label unknown as **Body Puzzle**.

UK: A Taste of Fear/Arthouse - 94m 40s BBFC

'18', uncut, stereo as **Body Puzzle**.

USA: Triboro Entertainment - full screen, 98m

26s as **Body Puzzle**.

Laserdisc:

USA: Triboro Entertainment/Image - as **Body Puzzle**.

THE BOGEY MAN AND THE FRENCH MURDERS

La casa d'appuntamento ('The House of Appointments', ie. a brothel)

Nattens Haevn (Denmark: 'Vengeance of the Night')

Maison de Rendez-Vous (France)

Meurte dans la 17e avenue (France: video re-title)

Das Auge des Bosen (West Germany)

La brigada del Inspector Bogart (Spain)

Murder in Paris (USA and UK: video re-title)

L'occhio malefico (Italy: working title)

The Evil Eye (English language sales title)

Paris Sex Murders

The French Sex Murders

Call Girls For Inspector Bogart

Paris Murders

1972 Italy Eastmancolor Telecolor 81m

Production Company: Costantino International

Film (Rome)/G.O.P.A. Film (Baden Baden)

Director: Fred Lyon Morris (Ferdinando Merighi)

Producer: Dick Randall, Marius Mattei

Story: Paolo Daniele

Script: Marius Mattei, Ferdinando Merighi,

Robert Oliver (Ramiro Oliveros)

Cinematography: Mario Mancini, Gunter Otto

Editor: Bruno Mattei

Art Director: Giovanni Fratolocchi

Music: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: Flavio Merkel

Cast: Anita Ekberg (*Madame Colette*), Rosalba

Neri (*Marianne, Antoine's ex-wife*), Evelyn Kraft,

Howard Vernon (*Professor Theodore*

Waldemar), Peter Martell, Barbara Bouchet

(*Francine*), Robert Sacchi (*Inspector Pontaine*),

Eva Astor, Rolf Eden, William Alexander, Piera

Viotti, Alessandro Perrella, Ada Pometti.



Antoine Gottvalles, a hot-tempered and violent petty criminal, appears to have killed Francine one of the prostitutes at Madame Colette's exclusive brothel; however, the real murderer slips away unnoticed. Antoine is wrongly convicted and sentenced to death, and vows to take revenge from beyond the grave. On the way to the guillotine, he escapes but is accidentally (and ironically) decapitated in the ensuing motorcycle chase. Professor Waldemar, a friend of the presiding judge, manages to obtain Antoine's head for some experiments involving eyeballs. Soon after, the judge's throat is slashed and it appears that Antoine's curse is being enacted. Further victims, all of whom were at the brothel on the night of the murder, are killed in a chain reaction. The killer is finally revealed and the film ends as it began with a fatal chase up the Eiffel Tower.

Under any of its many titles, this is a cracking example of early Seventies Euro-tosh which seems to have endeared itself to most who have seen it. Never mind that it's packed with inconsistencies and absurdities - most *gialli* are equally guilty when held up for close examination. Indeed, the truly deranged plot, the laughable attempts to weave in a horror angle and the fact that the police inspector is a professional Humphrey Bogart lookalike (for no apparent reason!) makes this bizarre concoction all the more agreeable. Fans will appreciate the added bonus of nudity from the attractive female cast and some reliably tacky gore courtesy of Carlo Rambaldi (throats are slashed and there are two beheadings), while curious details such as negative shots during the courtroom scene and the jaunt up the Eiffel Tower at the start and end - bringing everything neatly to a cyclic close - give the film a memorable identity of its own.

Video:

Denmark: WM Video ApS - 83m 30s as **The**

French Sex Murders.

France: Andromaque/Century Stars - 76m 54s,

full screen as **Meurte dans la 17e avenue**.

Proserpine - as **Meurte dans la 17e avenue**.

Greece: Video Alsen - full screen as **The**

French Sex Murders with sleeve title **Call**

Girls for Inspector Bogart

Holland: Award - full screen.

Italy: AVO Film.

Sweden: label unknown - matted as **The**

French Sex Murders.

UK: Magnum - 84m as **The Bogeyman And**

The French Murders; Video Playback - 83m

26s as **Murder in Paris**.

CARMELLE DA UNO SCONOSCIUTO

('Sweets for a Stranger')

1985 Italy colour 94m

Production Company: Reteitalia S.p.A./Numero

Uno Cinematografica S.r.l.

Director: Franco Ferrini

Producer: Claudio Bonivento

Story and Script: Franco Ferrini, Andrea

Giuseppini

Cinematography: Giuseppe Berardini

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Art Director: Bruno Daro

Music: Umberto Smaila

Music Director: Diego Michelon

Assistant Director: Angelo Vicari

Cast: Barbara De Rossi, Marina Suma, Athina

Cenci, Mara Venier, Laura Betti (*Jolanda*), Annie

Papa, Gerardo Amato, Sabrina Ferilli, Maurizio

Donadoni, Anna Galiena, Lidia Broccolino,

Antonella Ponziani, Alessandra Bonarota, Ilaria

Cecchi

A prostitute is slashed to death in a park by a killer on a bicycle. Shortly afterwards, Sally, another prostitute, is shocked to discover a fellow working girl has also been the victim of the maniac. She and her client transport the badly mutilated woman to hospital but she dies anyway. An old hooker is the next victim, knifed to death besides the docks. The working women



German video sleeve for 'La Casa del buon ritorno'

hold a meeting to discuss their predicament and decide to fight back. Meanwhile, Sally vainly attempts to recall the dying prostitute's last words...

Argento script-collaborator Ferrini's debut as a director is a pseudo-feminist attempt to depict the lives of prostitutes. Rather than simply being portrayed as attractive fodder for a killer, these working girls are humanised and shown at home trying to cope with bringing up children. The killer represents a deadly threat but also one of the hazards of a dangerous 'job'. In the sort of derisory scene one might expect from tongue-in-cheek Tinto Brass, the women even attempt to provoke their apparent oppressor into revealing himself (he is assumed to be male) by flashing their knickers, bras and breasts while standing in a defiant line. Aside from this incongruous sequence, **Caramelle** is a subdued thriller with social realism at its core. Although never intended for the same audience as pure exploitation such as **Red Light Girls** or **Black Angel** it's clearly a *giallo* and the revelation of the killer's identity is suitably ridiculous (yet considering the clues offered throughout, quite appropriate). Ferrini got the idea for **Caramelle** while co-scripting **Rings Of Fear**, which prompts me to admit that, despite his best intentions, I would rather sit through that entertaining trash ten times than watch this docu-drama again.

Video:

Italy: Panarecord; Penta/Univideo - 90m 34s, slight black bars.

LA CASA DALLE FINESTRE CHE RIDONO

('The House with the Windows That Laugh')

La maison aux fenetres qui rient (France)

La porte de l'enfer (France: video re-title)

1976 Italy Technicolor Technospes scope 110m

Production Company: A.M.A. Film S.r.l.

Director: Pupi Avati

Producer: Gianni Minervini, Antonio Avati

Story: Pupi Avati, Antonio Avati

Script: Pupi Avati, Antonio Avati, Gianni Cavina, Maurizio Costanzo.

Cinematography: Pasquale Rachini

Editor: Giuseppe Baghdighian

Art Direction and Costumes: Luciana Morosetti

Music: Amedeo Tommasi

Special Effects: Giovanni Corridori

Assistant Direction: Cesare Bastelli

Cast: Lino Capolicchio (*Stefano*), Francesca

Marciano (*Francesca*), Gianni Cavina (*Coppola*), Giulio Pizzirani (*Antonio Mazza*), Vanna Busoni (*Laura Legnani*), Andrea Matteuzzi (*Poppi, a lawyer*), Bob Tonelli (*Solmi*), Pietro Brambilla (*Lidio*), Ferdinando Orlandi (*Marshall*), Ines Ciaschetti (*teacher*), Flavia Giorgio, Carla Astolfi, Tonino Corazzari, Pina Borione, Arrigo Lucchini, Luciano Bianchi, Libero Grandi, Eugene Walter (*priest/sister*).

Emilia-Romagna, Northern Italy. The 1950's: Stefano, a young painter, is invited to a provincial village to restore a large fresco in the local church. The fresco - which had been painted by a notorious local artist called Bruno Legnani - graphically depicts St. Sebastian being tortured to death by two figures. Village rumours suggest that the artist, dubbed 'the painter of agonies', depicted the real pain of his male models as they were tortured to death by his twisted sisters. Stefano's friend, Antonio, reveals that he has discovered a bizarre story about the fresco and a house with windows 'that laugh'. That night, Antonio is murdered, and as Stefano seeks the identity of the killer he unravels the terrifying secret about the decadent artist whose obsession with death impinges on the life of the living...

As in **L'arma, l'ora, il movente**, Avati plays with some of the conventions of the *giallo* genre but creates a film with an entirely different aesthetic, and instead of an old dark house the titular dwelling is an almost surreal creation. The unsettling credits sequence - a montage of sepia images which show a bound male figure screaming in agony as he is knifed repeatedly - provides a clue to the film's revelations (snuff paintings!) whilst giving the viewer a foretaste of what to expect. As in his recent supernatural opus **The Arcane Enchanter**, Avati allows the suspense to build gradually and it's only during the tense final section of the film, when the horrible truth begins to dawn, that the skilled director reveals the full horror of the dangerous situation which Stefano has placed himself in.

Video:

France: Pyramid/Approvision - 105m 59s, letterboxed, with sleeve artwork filched from **The Gate**.

Italy: 105m 51s, letterboxed, video given away free with copies of *L'Unita*.

USA: Video Search of Miami - bootleg of French release with the addition of inaccurate subtitles.

LA CASA DEL BUON RITORNO

('The House of Good Returns')

Das Haus der Blauen Schatten (Germany: 'The House with Blue Shutters')

1986 Italy Kodak colore LV (Luciano Vittori) 90m

Production Company: Moviemachine

Director: Beppe Cino

Producer: Beppe Cino

Story and Script: Beppe Cino

Cinematography: Antonio Minutolo

Editor: Emanuele Foglietti

Art Director and Costumes: Silvana Fantino

Music: Carlo Siliotto

Assistant Director: Diego D'Innocenza

Cast: Amanda Sandrelli (*Margit*), Stefano

Gabrini (*Luca*), Francesco Costa (*Bruno*),

Fiammetta Carena (*Ayesha*), Lola Ledda (*Lola*),

Stanis Ledda (*Luca as a boy*), Fabrizio Capuani

(*Bruno as a boy*), Eloisa Cino (*girl at piano*),

Eleonora Salvadori (*Luca's mother*), Elvira

Castellano (*Bruno's mother*).

Prior to their marriage, Luca and his fiancée Margit decide to spend a few days in his childhood home. Unfortunately, Luca is haunted by a tragedy that occurred there more than fifteen years previously: a young girl called Lola was pushed from a balcony to her death and the person responsible was never identified. Slowly, he pieces together details from his boyhood while a mysterious woman, Ayesha,



keeps unnerving him. Several violent deaths occur before the bizarre truth is revealed... Only having had access to an Italian language version, the nuances of **La casa del buon ritorno** are still something of a mystery to me. However, there is little dialogue in this moody, dreamlike concoction so it can still be appreciated on a purely emotional and visual level. The theme, as in other *gialli* (**Don't Torture a Duckling**, **Who Saw Her Die?**, **My Dear Killer**, etc), is lost innocence and in this respect the plot effortlessly evokes those childhood games which seem on the surface to have no meaning but which often have significance in later life. The style is reminiscent of Pupi Avati's undefinable work and in a curious but welcome touch Cino uses the disturbing mask from the Japanese classic **Onibaba** (1964).

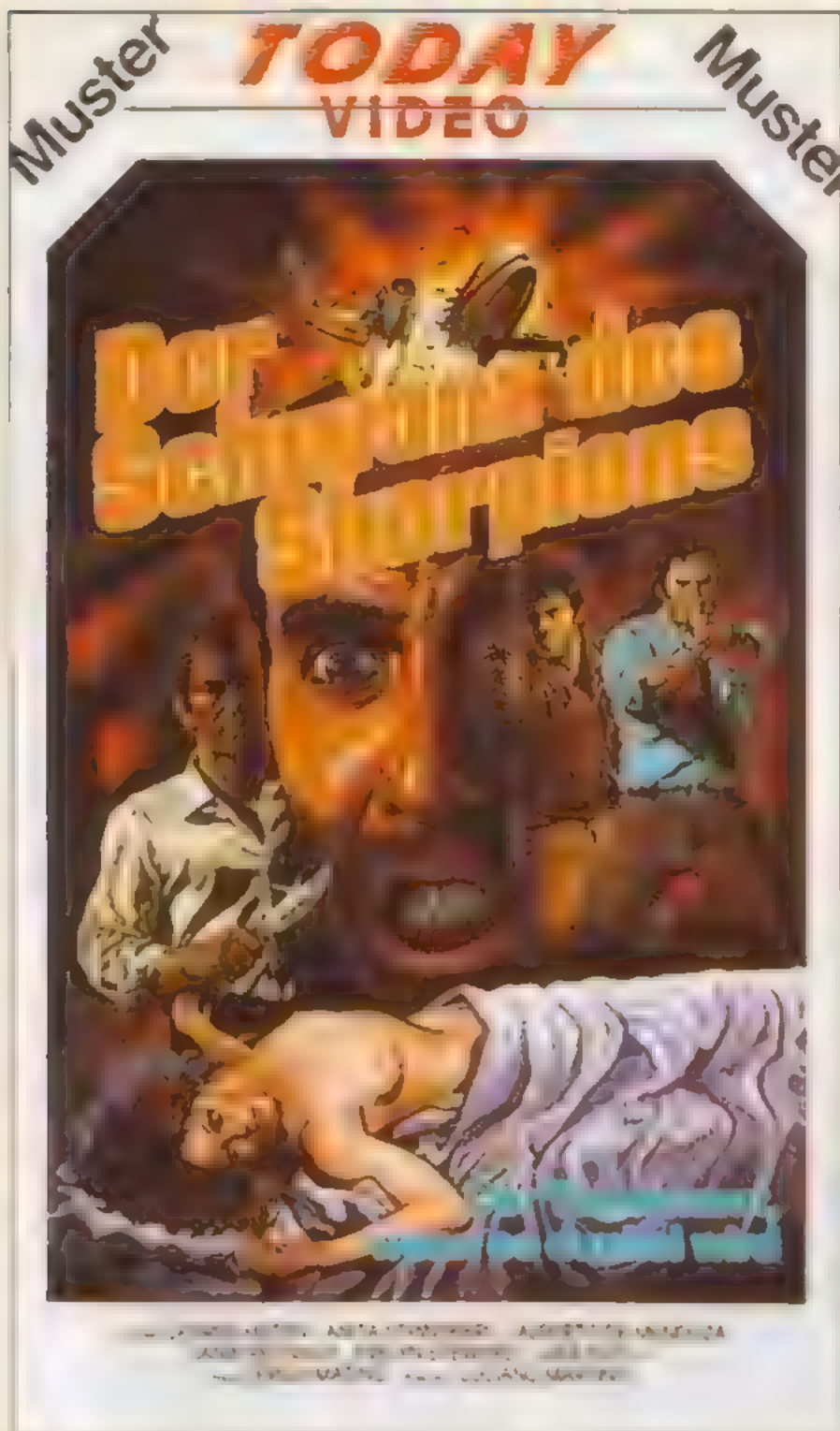
Video:

Germany: Ascot Video - 86m 49s, full screen with a swish silver sleeve as **Das Haus der Blauen Schatten**.

Italy: Magnum 3B - 86m 48s, full screen.

French video sleeve for 'The Case of the Scorpion's Tail'





Above: striking German video sleeve for 'The Case of the Scorpion's Tail'.
Right: Italian 'Locandina' poster for 'The Cat O'Nine Tails'

LA CASA DOVE ABITAVA CORINNE

(The House Where Corinne Lived)
1996 Italy Kodak Augustus Color
Production Company: Faso Film S.r.l./Mediaset/Taurus Film
Director: Maurizio Lucidi
Executive Producer: Gioia [Maria] Scola
Story and Script: Nicola Badalucco, Giuseppe Badalucco
Cinematography: Gianlorenzo Battaglia
Editor: Antonio Siciliano
Art Director: Ezio Altieri
Music: Pino Massara
Cast: Barbara De Rossi, Gottfried John, Giuliana Deandrea, Luigi Petrucci, Fabio Sartor, Maria Tadei, Giovanni Visentin, Pascal Persiano, Massimo Ranieri, Enzo Turrin, Ornella Pacelli, Paola Desideri (Corinne), Maria Cristina Heller, Deborah Bettega, Irene Buto.

A young woman is slashed to death while taking a shower. Doriana Paolis, a lawyer, moves into the now vacant apartment and soon becomes embroiled in the mystery of the former inhabitant's violent demise. She receives a video tape which shows the victim (Corinne) being killed and is terrified when someone, presumably the murderer, scrawls the name 'Delia' on her mirror. The concierge acts suspiciously and seems to be the main suspect. However, a district attorney (a former tenant in the apartment block) assists Doriana by masquerading as a woman and attracting the man's attentions. It transpires that Corinne was only the alter-ego of Catherine, who led a double life as a porno actress and a prostitute. The man felt a compulsion to eradicate any man who reminded him of his daughter.

Despite a promising start (ie. a shower murder, which is a cliché, but like an old friend, good to see again) **Corinne** is soon slowed down by its lurid visuals which reveal its TV movie pedigree. This is a shame because although the film lacks its Nineties pedigree (with the lack of style and reliance on inoffensive visuals that have come to be expected from 'product' made for the num world sales), it also has an agreeable, old-fashioned **Rear Window** ambience. However, the real drawback is the Mrs. Paolis act which the district attorney laughingly undertakes in his desperate bid to unmask

Titanus



IL GATTO A NOVE CODE

DI DARIO ARGENTO

JAMES FRANCISCUS KARL MALDEN

CATHERINE SPAAK

IL GATTO A NOVE CODE

PIER PAOLO CAPPONI · HORST FRANK · RADA RASSIMOV · ALDO REGGIANI
CARLO ALIGHIERO · VITTORIO CONGIA · UGO FANGAREGGI · TOM FELLEGHY · EMILIO MARCHESINI · CORRADO OLMI · JACQUES STANY

CON CINZIA DE CAROLIS · WERNER POCHAT E LA PARTICIPAZIONE DI TINO CARRARO

PRODOTTO DA SALVATORE ARGENTO PER LA SEDA SPETTACOLI S.P.A. - TERRA FILMKUNST - LABRADOR FILMS - CROMOSCOPE - TECNOSTAMPA

IL PRESENTE MATERIALE È UNICO
E NON DEVE ESSERE RIPRODOTTO
SENZA IL CONSENSO DELLA SEDA
SPETTACOLI S.P.A. - TERRA FILMKUNST

TS 83/4

ANNO DI EDIZIONE 1970 POTOPOLI - ROMA

the killer. Amateur psychologists may be interested to note the presence of Gioia Maria Scola, a former victim, sorry actress, in *gialli* such as **Obsession - A Taste for Fear** and **Too Beautiful to Die** as an executive producer.

THE CASE OF THE SCORPION'S TAIL

La coda dello scorpione ('The Tail of the Scorpion')

La cola del escorpion (Spain)

La queue du scorpion (France)

Der Schwanz des Skorpiones (Germany)

1970 Italy/Spain Technochrome Cromoscope 93m

Production Company: Devon (Rome)/Coperlines (Madrid)

Director: Sergio Martino

Producer: Luciano Martino

Story: Eduardo Maria Brochero

Script: Eduardo Maria Brochero, Ernesto

Gastaldi, Sauro Scavolini

Cinematography: Emilio Foriscot

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Music: Bruno Nicolai

Cast: George Hilton (*Peter Lynch*), Anita Strindberg (*Cleo Dupont*), Evelyn Stewart (*Ilda Galli*) (*Lisa Baumer*), Luigi Pistilli (*police inspector*), Janine Reynaud (*Laura Florakis, Kurt's mistress*), Alberto De Mendoza (*John Stanley*), Tom Felleghy (*Tomasso Felleghi*), Luis Barboo (*Sharif, Lisa's lawyer*), Annalisa Nardi.

Lisa Baumer is canoodling with her lover in London when the plane carrying her husband Kurt explodes in flight. She inherits a million dollars. Soon after, a blackmailing ex-boyfriend is mysteriously killed. The wealthy widow travels to Athens in order to collect her inheritance but is investigated by the insurance company who assign Peter Lynch to the case. Lisa is soon menaced in an abandoned theatre by Lara Florakis, Kurt's mistress, and Sharif, her lawyer and only manages to escape with Lynch's assistance. Having collected her inheritance, Lisa prepares to travel to Tokyo in order to meet her lover. However, while packing she is suddenly razored to death by a black-gloved killer...

The Case of the Scorpion's Tale is one of the best of Sergio Martino's impressive batch of thrillers. Besides a jigsaw puzzle of a plot, it has considerable energy, some pleasing exotic locations and is crammed with a great cast of shady characters. Sultry Euro-actresses Evelyn Stewart and Anita Strindberg provide a winning dual female lead, the former being sliced open a third of the way into the proceedings, while the male cast includes George Hilton at his shifty best. The attacks of the greedy interlopers (there are two killers in a double-value death threat) are shot with verve and the resulting gory carnage is graphically presented. The scorpion of the title turns out to be a gold cuff-link and provides a neat **Blow-Up** style photographic clue to the identity of the killers. The only distracting flaw is an unconvincing model which is meant to represent the exploding aircraft at the film's start.

Video:

France: American Video - 90m 04s, letterboxed as **La queue du scorpion**.

Germany: Arcade - 90m 42s, letterboxed as **Der Schwanz des Skorpiones**; Ocean Musik - cut, letterboxed as **Der Schwanz des Skorpiones**.

Greece: Plus Video - 89m 49s, full screen, two releases with different artwork as **The Case of the Scorpion's Tail**; Kino Video Limited - 89m 27s, full screen, jumpy print, as **The Case Of The Scorpion's Tail**. The opening credits play against a plain black background and the end credits are missing.

Italy: Videogram, Easy Video - as **La coda dello scorpione**.



French publicity material for 'The Cat O'Nine Tails'

THE CAT O'NINE TAILS

Il gatto a nove code

Die Neunschwanziige Katze (Germany)

Le chat a neuf queue (France)

De Nihalede Kat (Denmark)

De Kat de Negen Staarten (Holland)

Kilencfarku Macska (Hungary)

O gato das sete vidas (Portugal)

El gato de las nueve colas (Spain)

1971 Italy/West Germany/France

Technostampa Cromoscope 112m

Production Company: Seda Spettacoli/Mondial

Films (Rome)/Terra Filmkunst

(Munich)/Labrador Films (France)

Director: Dario Argento

Producer: Salvatore Argento

Story: Dario Argento, Luigi Collo, Dardano

Sacchetti

Script: Dario Argento

Cinematography: Enrico Menczer

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Art Director: Carlo Leva

Music: Ennio Morricone

Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: Roberto Pariante

Cast: Karl Malden (*Franco Arno, nicknamed*

'Cookie'), James Franciscus (*Carlo Giodarno*),

Catherine Spaak (*Anna Terzi*), Cinzia de Carolis

(*Lori*), Carlo Alighiero (*Doctor Calabresi*),

Vittorio Congia (*Righetto, the photographer*),

Pier Paolo Capponi (*Superintendent Spimi*),

Corrado Olmi (*Morsella*), Tino Carraro

(*Professor Terzi*), Aldo Reggiani (*Doctor*

Casoni), Horst Frank (*Doctor Braun*), Emilio

Marchesini (*Doctor Mombelli*), Tom Felleghy

(*Tomasso Felleghi*) (*Doctor Essen*), Rada

Rassimov (*Bianca Merusi*), Werner Pochath

(*Manuel*).

While out walking with his young niece, Franco Arno, a blind ex-reporter, overhears a blackmail plot. The Terzi Institute, a bio-chemical research facility, is broken into and one of the scientists is subsequently killed in a train 'accident'. Arno is suspicious and enlists the help of Carlo Giordani, a reporter. Their combined investigations reveal nine clues, including a revealing photo of the 'accident'. The negative is soon stolen and the photographer is killed. Bianca Merusi, the murdered scientist's mistress, finds a tiny clue to the killer's identity. She is eradicated but not before secreting the evidence on her person. Arno and Giordani break into Bianca's tomb, while the desperate killer kidnaps Arno's niece and demands the evidence in exchange for her life. Back at the Terzi Institute, Giordani chases the killer, identified via wounds inflicted by Arno, up onto the roof...

After the fetishistic violence and clever visual games of **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage** Argento came up with this more traditional but idiosyncratic whodunnit. Despite its seemingly formulaic detective narrative, the film features some impressive stylistic flourishes and introduces the director's fascination with pseudo-scientific elements, in this case the theory that certain individuals are born with criminal tendencies. **Cat** is a thoroughly entertaining, and expertly plotted thriller which also contains some of the most sympathetic characters Argento has created for the screen. Those staples of the genre, red herrings, are everywhere, and, as is the case in some other *gialli*, we are even asked to question the innocence of each of the amateur detectives on the case - the scene where blood-soaked Arno reappears in the tomb before a clearly petrified Giordani is

priceless. **The Cat O'Nine Tails** is rarely rated highly by Argento acolytes, probably because the director allows the plot to unfold without heavy reliance on the bravura set-pieces for which he is so well known, and more significantly, because there is a lack of overtly sadistic violence (although the killer's demise in the lift-shaft is suitably squirm-inducing). Compared to many of its contemporaries, however, **Cat** is an exemplary example of the genre and is certainly a tale that can be savoured again and again.

Video:

Canada: Cinema Home Theater - 112m, full screen.
France: SVP, Cinema Conseil.
Greece: AV (Audio Visual) Enterprises.
Hungary: Mokep - approx. 107m, letterboxed.
Italy: Creazioni, Mondadori, Club Del Video.
Portugal: Filmitalus.
Japan: Columbia - 112m, letterboxed
UK: Warner Home Video - 107m 11s, full screen, pan and scan. Re-released by Warners as part of their insulting 'Terror Vision' sell-through, full screen, uncut version with a BBFC '18' certificate.
USA: Bingo Video - cut to less than 90 minutes, poor quality; Cinema Video Theater.

Laserdisc:

Japan: Sony - 112m, letterboxed; Columbia - 112m, letterboxed; Toshiba - 112m, letterboxed.

Soundtrack:

Italy: General Music single with two themes; Point Records CD with eleven tracks; ViVi CD - *Time For Suspense: Ennio Morricone* - soundtrack compilation.
USA: CD *An Ennio Morricone - Dario Argento Trilogy* - a fifteen track compilation of music from **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage**, **The Cat O'Nine Tails** and **Four Flies on Grey Velvet**, plus a five minute interview with the composer.

THE CAT'S VICTIMS

Il gatto dagli occhi di giada ('The Cat with Eyes of Jade')

Kattens Ofre (Denmark)

Terreur sur la lagune (France)

Die Stimme des Todes (Germany)

Katten med Stengat (Sweden)

Watch Me When I Kill (USA)

1977 Italy Gevacolor Technospes Vistavision 110m

Production Company: Elis Cinematografica

Director: Antonio Bido

Producer: Gabriella Nardi

Story: Vittorio Schiraldi

Script: Vittorio Schiraldi, Antonio Bido, Roberto Natale, Aldo Serio

Cinematography: Mario Vulpiani

Editor: Maurizio Tedesco

Art Director: Gianfranco Ramacci

Music: Trans Europa Express

Assistant Director: Ervino Wetzl

Cast: Corrado Pani (*Luca Carmen*), Paola

Tedesco (*Mara*), Franco Citti (*Pasquale*

Ferrante), Fernando Cerulli (*Giovanni Bozzi, a*

loan shark), Giuseppe Addobbati, Gianfranco

Bullo, Yill Pratt, Bianca Toccafondi (*Esmeralda*

Messori), Inna Alexeiva, Paolo Malco (*Carlo*),

Cristina Piras, Roberto Antonelli, Gaetano

Rampin, Giuseppe Pennese, Giovanni Vanini.

A pharmacist is razored to death by a killer with a feline face. Mara, a dancer and possible witness, is subsequently stalked by the killer and forced to move in with Luca, her boyfriend, for protection. Having been drawn into the mystery, Luca studies the threatening 'phone calls which a strange man called Bozzi receives and begins to unravel the killer's bizarre motive. However, Bozzi is soon throttled in his bath while his mistress, Esmeralda Messori, is scalded to death. It emerges that the duo were both jurors in the trial of Pasquale Ferrante, an escaped murderer, so he becomes the obvious

suspect. However, Luca is unconvinced. The trail leads back to the Second World War and the insidious actions of Nazi collaborators. **The Cat's Victims** represents director Bido's first attempt to follow in Argento's footsteps, even though it lacks the audacious set pieces of the latter. Nevertheless, the murders - especially Bozzi's bath-tub demise (accompanied by opera on the soundtrack) - are filmed with gloating detail and the brief shots of the killer's cat-like face are in keeping with an Italian cinematic tradition of ridiculous over-emphasis. Perhaps as a nod to the cat theme there are also a number of effective Val Lewtonesque jump scares. The score, by Kraftwerk-inspired combo Trans Europa Express, is an attempt to combine Goblin's **Deep Red** basslines with **Suspria** shrieks and moans and is all the more agreeable for it.

Video:

Denmark: Filmlab.

Holland: Starvideo - 90m 11s, full screen.

Italy: PAC.

Italy: Linea.

Sweden: Trix - uncut, letterboxed, poor transfer with some notable flaws with sleeve title

Katten Med Stengat.

UK: Redemption - 92m 29s, 91m 36s, letterboxed at 1:75:1 as **The Cat's Victims**.

USA: Thorn/HBO - 94m 14s, full screen as **Watch Me When I Kill** with a short credit sequence filmed in the USA.

CIAM SI MUORE

('Clap One's Dead' - this is not literal, Ciak is both a clapperboard and the sound it makes, while 'si muore' translates as 'one is dead')

1974 Italy Eastmancolor 89m

Production Company: Comet Film (Turin)

Director: Mario Moroni

Story: Roberto Mauri, Liliana Pagani,

Scene de Carolis and a rat in 'The Cat O'Nine Tails'



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FRANCISCUS

JANO

70

EL GATO DE 9 COLAS



'The Cat O'Nine Tails'

Gianfranco Pagani

Script: Roberto Mauri, Mario Moroni

Cinematography: Giovanni Raffaldi

Editor: Liliana Giboni

Music: Aldo Buonocore

Assistant Director: Mauro Macario

Cast: Giorgio Ardisson (*Inspector Menzies*), Annabella Incontrera (*Fanny*), Ivano Staccioli (*Richard*), Antonio Pierfederici, Belinda Bron, Carlo Enrici, Renzo Ozzano.

An actress is murdered during the shooting of a film. Inspector Menzies interrogates two suspects: an old pervert and Richard, an actor recently fired from the production, but no-one is arrested. Filming continues: Mary, another actress, objects to a scene in which her character is to be burnt naked at the stake. She is subsequently strangled to death in her trailer with a piece of electrical cable. Following a party, Fanny is nearly killed when her head is repeatedly bashed against the taps in her shower. The killer turns up at a hospital and finishes the job by disconnecting Fanny's life support machine. The police close in on Richard so he makes an escape via the sewers. The film-makers prepare a scene in an empty theatre, which involves everyone getting into superhero costumes, including the entire crew. Richard sneaks into the theatre and dons a costume too. The final showdown is about to be enacted...

Formerly a footnote in Italian reference books, **Ciak si muore** is one of a number of ultra-rare finds soon to be unleashed by Redemption on the ultimate format in home viewing, DVD. Whatever next? The film itself is a very low budget, kitschy attempt to emulate, and at the same time parody, not only the *giallo* genre but the entire process of film production. And this cheeky little offering partly succeeds, especially during the first half when we witness the film-makers constantly bickering, the actresses stripping off and the killer's murderous interventions. It is only when the police investigation gets into full swing that the fun slows and we are subjected to a seemingly endless chase sequence. Despite this, the finale, in which the entire cast wear *Diabolik* style costumes is suitably entertaining, and the revelation of the killer's identity is in keeping with the satirical tone. Any film which depicts a funeral being halted just to allow a titillating shot of a woman bending over to reveal her see-thru black panties can't be all bad, can it?

Co-scripter Roberto Mauri also directed an exuberant horror pic, **Slaughter of the Vampires** (1962); a rarely seen *giallo*, **Le notti della violenza** (1966); a weird psycho-drama, **Madeleine, anatomia di un incubo** (1974) and the utterly-trashy but fun **Le porno killers** (1980).

VHS:

USA: Redemption/Image (forthcoming).

DVD:

USA: Redemption/Image (forthcoming).

CIRCLE OF FEAR

Amici perfetto ('Perfect Alibi')

Kreis der Angst (Germany: 'Turning Circle of Fear')

1971, Italy colour

Production Company: P.A.C. Produzioni Atlas

Director: George B. Lewis (Aldo Lado)

Script: Dardano Sacchetti

Script: Dardano Sacchetti, Robert Brodie Booth, George B. Lewis (Aldo Lado)

Cinematographer: Luigi Kuveiller

Editor: Peter Money

Assistant Director: Charly Liv

Music: Romano Mussolini with Francesco Santucci

Cast: Michael Woods (*Tony Giordani*), Kay Sandvik (*Lisa*, *Giordani's partner*), Annie Girardot (*Countess*), Carla Cassola, Gianna Maria Scaffidi, Burt Young, Philippe Leroy (*Tony's superior*).

After being assaulted by a mysterious figure, narcotics agent Tony Giordani is recuperating

COLD EYES OF FEAR



Your last scream
will be the loudest.

STARRING: FRANK WOLF • FERNANDO REY • KARIN SHUBERT
PRODUCED BY CINEMAR FILMS DIRECTED BY ENZO G. CASTELLARI

when he discovers that his ex-wife has been killed. Tony's superiors are convinced that the Mafia are carrying out a vendetta, but his investigations lead to an old abandoned house which his late wife, an estate agent, photographed the day before she died. Inside the house, he discovers a charred corpse and clues which lead to the 'Full Moon Killer', a maniac responsible for the decapitation of several prostitutes. Tony encounters the strange Countess who owns the house and now resides in an asylum. She escapes and a woman is murdered. Tony desperately tries to resolve the mystery before Lisa, his partner and lover, is placed in more danger...

Scripter Sacchetti and director Lado's attempt to combine an action-orientated Mafia narrative with *giallo* elements is another example of unconvincing Nineties 'product'. The action sequences are poorly executed, the tempestuous scenes featuring Woods and genre veteran Philippe Leroy as his foul-mouthed boss are unconvincing, and Burt (*Amityville Horror 2*) Young's attempt to portray a small-time crook are merely specious. On the plus side, Annie Girardot is creepy as the psycho-on-the-loose and the sleaze ante is upped by an uncommonly sweaty sexual encounter between Woods

and Kay Sandvik. Unfortunately, Romano Mussolini's score is a real low-rent affair which resorts to Heavy Metal riffs for effect. In **Night Train Murders** Lado depicted unforgettable images of cruelty, however the more violent aspects of **Circle Of Fear** were apparently toned down by P.A.C., the production company,



who wanted to increase its sales potential. Pity. A tiny damning sign of P.A.C.'s disinterest in their own movie reveals itself when their promo trailer accidentally re-titles this failed thriller **Circle Of Fire!!!**

Video:

Germany: VMP - 91m approx, slightly letterboxed as **Wendekreis der Angst**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Beat CD.

COL CUORE IN GOLA

('With Heart in Mouth')

Le coeur aux lèvres (France)

En cinquième vitesse ('The Fifth Speed')

Enigma (pre-production title)

1967 Italy/France Eastmancolor

Technostampa scope 107m

Production Company: Panda Cinematografica

(Rome)/Les Films Corona (Paris)

Director: Tinto Brass

Story: loosely based on 'Il sepolcro di carta'

('The Map of the Tomb') by Sergio Donati

Script: Tinto Brass, Francesco Longo, Pierre

Levy Corti

Cinematography: Silvano Tranquilli

Editor: Tinto Brass

Art Director: Carmelo Patrono based on drawings by Guido Crepax

Music and Music Director: Armando Trovajoli

Assistant Director: Carla Cipriani

Cast: Jean-Louis Trintignant (*Bernard*), Ewa

Aulin (*Jane Burroughs*), Roberto Bisacco

(*David*), Charles Kohler (*Jerome Burroughs*),

Luigi Bellini (*Jerry Roll*), Monique Scoazec

(*Veronica*), Enzo Consoli (*barman*), Vira Silenti

(*Martha Burroughs*).

Uncredited Cast: David Prowse (*thug*).

Bernard, a French actor, is looking for a job in London. He discovers a young woman, Jane, by the corpse of Ruby Prescott, the owner of a night club. Convinced that she is innocent, he runs off with her and attempts to discover the murderer's true identity. The couple soon fall in love and find themselves chased all over London - the zoo, the docks, the Underground, even Clapton greyhound racing stadium - by shady characters.

Although **Col cuore in gola** might appear to be a regular *giallo*, this overly-flashy Pop Art diversion is an altogether different kettle of fish. Like **Blow-Up**, the film is essentially a product of its time and is seriously marred by continual attempts to cram trendy imagery, political statements (footage of Vietnam, a CND rally) and self-conscious dialogue into its overlong running time. Brass had obviously been influenced by Jean-Luc Godard and drops in references to Film Noir, but the resulting visuals are an empty exercise in style over narrative (for example, the film occasionally, and seemingly without reason, switches from Eastmancolor to black and white). As with many Sixties event movies, seen in retrospect this 'happening' is merely tiresome rather than intriguing - you don't care who killed whom and the film-makers don't seem to either. With LSD inspired editing and a cacophonous score by Armando Trovajoli, this is a non-happening that will leave you with a headache. **Death Laid An Egg** (made the same year) also toplines cool Trintignant and pouting blonde Ewa Aulin but avant-garde anarchy works in its favour rather than being an irritating distraction.

Video:

Italy: Ricordi Video - 99m 22s, full screen as **Col cuore in gola**.

USA: Video Search of Miami - bootlegged from a poor quality, letterboxed French language print with the addition of subtitles and sold under its translated title **The Fifth Speed**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: CAM LP.

THE COLD EYES OF FEAR

Gli occhi freddi della paura

Los frios ojos del miedo (Spain)

Desperate Moments (alternate English language title)

Pelon Kylmat Silmat (Finland)

Hidegíelos Retteges (Hungary: video sleeve title)

1971 Italy/Spain Technicolor Techniscope 95m

Production Company: Cinemar

(Rome)/Atlantida Film (Madrid)

Director: Enzo G. Castellari [Enzo Girolami]

Story: Tito Carpi, Enzo G. Castellari [Enzo Girolami]

Script: Tito Carpi, Leo Anchoriz, Enzo G.

Castellari [Enzo Girolami]

Dialogue and Post-Synchronization: Gene Luotto

Cinematography: Antonio Lopez Ballesteros

Editor: Vincenzo Tomassi

Art Director: Roman Calatayud Alegre

Music: Ennio Morricone

Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: L. Garo Poza

Cast: Giovanni Ralli (*Anna*), Frank Wolff (*Welt*), Fernando Rey (*Judge Horatio Bagg*), Julian Mateos (*Quill*), Karin Schubert (*woman in stage show*), Leon Lenoir (*Leonardo Scavino*), Franco Marletta, Gianni Garko (*Paul Badell*).

London: Peter, a hedonistic young man from the upper-classes, picks up an Italian tart called Anna in Soho and takes her back to his father's home. However, a cockney criminal lies in wait and takes the couple hostage. Meanwhile, the young man's father, Judge Badell, sends over a policeman with a personal note for his son. The copper turns out to be an impostor, and in league with the intruder. Although their motives seem to be robbery, it transpires that the bogus bobby is Welt, an ex-con, out to revenge himself on the judge for his sentence and an alleged double-cross. Welt boasts about an explosive device he has planted outside the judge's office. In desperation, the young man causes a short circuit and in the dark a violent struggle takes place...

Despite the intrusion of some rather overdone





Scene 'fotobusta' for 'The Crimes of the Black Cat'

...ents, **The Cold Eyes of Fear** is an... tale of hatred, deceit and revenge... in violent confrontation. A sly... sequence sets the tone: Karin Schubert... to sexual abuse at knifepoint... incident is revealed to be part of a... club performance billed as 'Ooh La... thesp side, Giovanni Ralli gives a... performance as a spunky Italian whore... currently caught up in the conflict... western star Gianni Garko is convinc-... ically English gentleman who is not... gentlemanly, while Frank Wolff gives... a criminal obsessed by revenge... superb atonal jazz score was partly... adding an obtuse wallop to... stylish visuals. The director fanted... sequences includes a plethora of... camera angles (a shot through... in a glass!) which, aided by... atorator Vincenzo Tomassi's judicious... to the early Seventies aura beloved... fans, while increasing the claus-

Tracks Videofilmit - 87m 28s, full... subtitles as **Pelon Kylmat**

Moscow - approx. 91m, full screen... letterboxed at 1.85:1, utilising... master taken from the original... as **The Cold Eyes of Fear** (forthcom-

World Entertainment - as **The Cold**... Redemption - letterboxed at... new digital master taken from... as **The Cold Eyes of**... as **Desperate Moments**.

... letterboxed at 1.85:1, utilis-... master taken from the original... **The Cold Eyes of Fear**, includes... **Desperate Moments**.

... letterboxed at 1.85:1, brand-

new digital master taken from the original neg-
ative as **The Cold Eyes of Fear**, includes trail-
er as **Desperate Moments**. Unfortunately, the
sleeve notes are typical of the jokey and unin-
formative comments which are used on the
back of most of their releases.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Italy: Point Records CD - on a double-bill;
ViVivideo CD - 'Time For Suspense: Ennio
Morricone' compilation contains excerpts.

CRAZY DESIRES OF A MURDERER

I vizi morbosi di una governante ('The
Morbid Vices of a Housekeeper')
1977 Italy Eastmancolor Stacofilm 95m
Production Company: GI. BA. SI.
Cinematografica
Director: Peter Rush (Filippo Walter Maria Ratti)
Story and Script: Ambrogio Molteni
Cinematographer: Gino Santini
Editor: Sergio Muzzi
Music and Music Director: Piero Piccioni
Cast: Isabelle Marchal (*Berta, the governess*),
Corrado Gaipa (*police inspector*), Karole Annie
Edel (*Ileana De Chablais*), Roberto Zattini
(*Leandro De Chablais*), Gaetano Russo (*Hans,
the butler*), Beppe Colombo, Adler Gray, Sergio
Orsi, Claudio Pedicchio, Colin Brisbane, Rino
Bellini, Patrizia Gori.

Ileana, the daughter of Baron De Chablais, a
wheelchair-ridden expert on Chinese art, arrives
back at the family castle after an extensive trip
around the world. Ileana invites a group of
friends to stay for the weekend. Unbeknown to
the young Countess, two of her supposed
friends, Bobby and Pier-Luigi, have smuggled in
opium with the Chinese artifacts she brought
back for her father. Meanwhile, in the castle cat-
combs, a simple-minded young man called
Leandro is kept locked away. Elsa, one of the
guests, is stabbed to death by a mysterious
killer who removes her eyeballs. In shock, the
Baron suffers a heart attack. An intuitive police

inspector investigates...

This old-fashioned, low-key entry from the
director of **Night of the Damned** moves
along at a snail's pace, lacks any real flair and
yet, like the stillborn creations of many low
budget film-makers, manages to exert a strange
fascination. The key to approaching this guilty
pleasure is that it must be watched in a lucid
frame of mind: it's certainly not a midnight
movie which can be viewed through an alco-
holic haze. In the clear light of day, the delibera-
tions of the probing police inspector (a good
performance by Corrado Gaipa, also in **My
Dear Killer**) prompt wry smiles, whilst the risi-
ble eye-gouging 'horror' plot elements and
brief nudity can be taken at face value. Piero
Piccioni's scant score is generally gloomy, in
keeping with the castle setting, but he also sup-
plies a couple of lively pieces to accompany sex
scenes. The film's Italian title seems curiously
inappropriate, suggesting that it is another of
director Ratti's sexploits (he was previously
responsible for **Erika** and **Mondo erotico**).

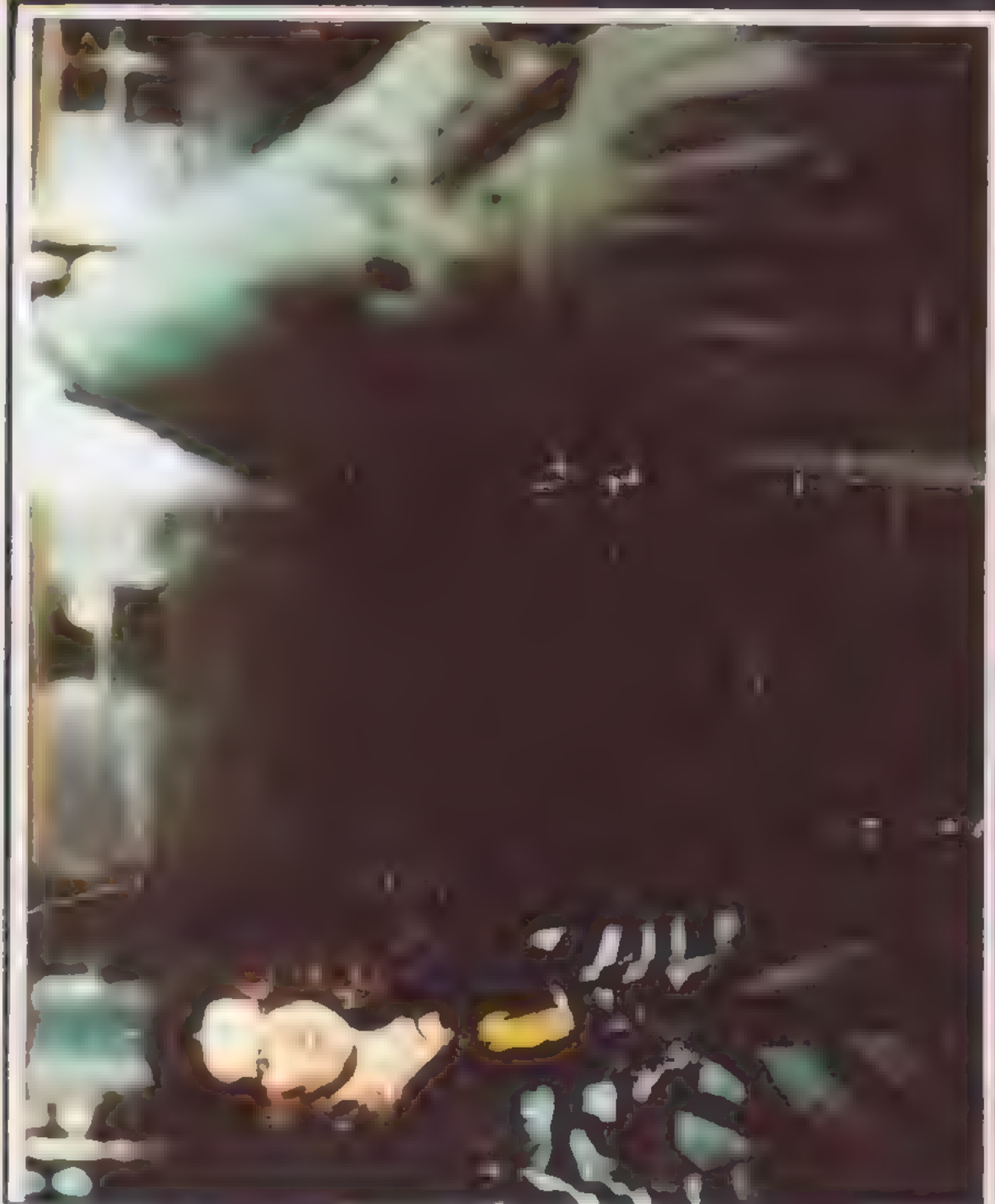
Video:

UK: Redemption - 84m 53s: cut by five seconds
(a shot of an eyeball being removed), letter-
boxed, subtitled, excellent print quality.

THE CRIMES OF THE BLACK CAT

7 scialli di seta gialla ('7 Shaws of Yellow
Silk')

Os crimes do gato preto (Portugal)
1972 Italy Technicolor Techniscope 108m
Production Company: Capitolina Produzion
Cinematografiche
Director: Sergio Pastore
Producer: Edmondo Amati
Story and Script: Alessandro Continenza
Giovanni Simonelli, Sergio Pastore
Cinematography: Guglielmo Mancor.
Editor: Vincenzo Tomassi
Art Director: Alberto Boccianti
Music: Manuel De Sica
Assistant Director: Roberto Pariente



Flora

UN FILM PRODOTTO DA EDMONDO AMATI

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SELEZIONE ITALIANA 1965



Cast: Anthony Steffen [Antonio de Tefte'] (*Peter Oliver*), Sylva Koscina (*Francoise Bally*), Giacomo Rossi Stuart (*Victor Morgan*), Jeanette Len (*Giovanna Lenzi*), Renato De Carmine (*Inspector Janssen*), Umberto Raho (*Burton, Oliver's manservant*), Romano Malaspina (*Harry*), Annabella Incontrera (*Helga Schurn*), Romano Malaspina, Imelde Marani, Liliana Pavlo, Lorenzo Piani, Isabelle Marchal, Irio Fantini, Shirley Corrigan (*Margot Thornhill*).

Copenhagen: Paola Whitney, a fashion model, is murdered. Peter Oliver, a blind composer, was her ex-lover so is the main suspect. Harry, a photographer, is also soon killed. Peter investigates the murders himself, focusing on a yellow shawl found by Paula's corpse. Helga, another model, and Wendy, her friend, are also found dead with yellow shawls beside their bodies. The amateur sleuth deduces that each of the female victims had been given a shawl soaked in a feline repellent and then scratched by a cat with claws dipped in curare. He is lured to a trap at a building site and narrowly escapes with his life. His assailant dies in quick time, but the real killer remains on the loose. Peter arrives too late to save Margot, his new friend, and she is viciously hacked to death while taking a shower. Peter is left alone with the killer...

With a fashion house setting as in *Blood and Black Lace*, a blind male detective figure who overhears a suspicious conversation, a feline theme recalling *The Cat O' Nine Tails*, gory images borrowed from Fulci's *A Lizard in a Woman's Skin*, and a shocking shower murder which graphically shows what Hitchcock hinted at in *Psycho*, *The Crimes of the Black Cat* is hardly an original production. The basic, but derivative, *giallo* plot reveals an underside of sexual excess, lesbianism, drug use and blackmail as possible motives for murder. Nevertheless, director Sergio Pastore makes good use of stylistic conceits to add to what might otherwise have been just a derivative production. The film's main strength is the killer's method of murder, which is one of the most bizarre ever. Some reviewers have objected to the absurdity of this operandi, but it is the sheer ridiculousness which is attractive and is central to the whole of the *giallo* genre. The more

Sparking Spanish artwork for 'Cry Out in Terror'





LA MUERTE ACARICIA A MEDIANOCHE

CON

SUSAN SCOTT · SIMON ANDREU · PETER MARTELL · CLAUDIE LANGE

Y LA PARTICIPACION DE

LUCIANO ERCOLI

DIRIGIDA POR

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TECHNICOLOR
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Susan Scott helps Simon Andreu in a Spanish still taken from 'Cry Out in Terror'

bizarre the murder weapon, the better, the more labyrinthine the plot, the greater the pleasure in following its twists, and, of course, the more outrageously inappropriate the identity of the murderer (or murderers) and their motives, the greater the anticipation of the dénouement. Moreover, the emphasis on outlandish pseudo-psychology to explain the killer(s) motives takes many *gialli* out of the realm of mere murder mysteries and aligns them firmly with the horror genre. Oh, and **The Crimes of the Black Cat** has a title theme by Manuel De Sica which is literally to die for!

Video:

Greece: WP Video - shower murder is shorter, full screen, Greek subtitles as **The Crimes of the Black Cat**; VHA Video - shower murder is shorter, full screen, Greek subtitles as **The Crimes of the Black Cat**.
Italy: CVR; Mitel - 92m 21s, letterboxed as **7 scialli di seta gialla**.
Portugal: Imavideo - with sleeve title **Os Crimes do Gato Preto**.

CROSS CURRENT

Un omicidio perfetto a termine di legge ('A Perfect Murder in Terms of the Law')

Homicidio al limite de la ley (Spain)

Il buio nel cervello (production title 'The Darkness in the Brain')

1971 Italy/Spain Eastmancolor Telecolor 85m

Production Company: Eurovision

Cinematografica (Rome)/Orfeo Prod. Cine.

Madrid

Director: Tonino Ricci

Producer: Roberto Bessi

Story: Aldo Crudo

Script: Aldo Crudo, José María Forque, Arpad de Riso, Rafael Azcona, Tonino Ricci
Cinematography: Cecilio Paniagua
Editor: Amedeo Giomini
Art Director: Flavio Mogherini
Music: Giorgio Gaslini
Cast: Philippe Leroy (*Marco Breda*), Elga Andersen (*Monica*), Ivan Rassimov (*Burt*), Rossana Yanni (*Terry Povani*), Franco Ressel (*Tommy Brown*), Julio Pena, Giorgio Cerioni, Rina Franchetti, Franco Fantasia, Liana Del Balzo, Mario Morales, Carla Mancini.

Marco, a successful power boat racer, has an 'accident' at sea and has to undergo brain surgery. While recuperating at his isolated villa, Marco discovers that he is suffering from memory loss. He is cared for by his wife Monica, along with Tommy, a business partner, and a female friend called Terry. Soon, a gardener who wanted a private meeting with Marco is strangled to death in a graveyard. Marco and Terry gradually develop a relationship, and in a fit of jealousy Monica starts a cat-fight with her rival. Marco intervenes and in the struggle his wife is accidentally shot. Rather than going to the police Terry suggests that they dispose of Monica's body in the sea. More murders follow: Tommy is gutted with a knife and the mother of the dead gardener is strangled. While a police detective is interviewing Marco about the killings Monica suddenly re-appears smiling. This is too much for Marco who jumps in his car and drives off a cliff. It emerges that Monica hatched the plan with Burt, an associate of her husband. However, Monica soon discovers Burt and Terry together and they reveal that she was just a tool in their plan to get rid of Marco. Monica reacts by shooting them both. Now alone in the villa, she is menaced by a figure

with black gloves...

Tonino Ricci is one of Italy's least talented directors, however with **Cross Current** he managed to create a surprisingly effective thriller. The intriguing storyline, a professional cast and a team of talented craftsmen such as cinematographer Cecilio Paniagua and production designer Flavio Mogherini (who went on to direct **The Pyjama Girl Case**) obviously assisted because this film is a pinnacle of achievement when compared to Ricci's other efforts. The stormy night sequences - which feature a creepy old gnarled tree (representing the twisted synapses in Marco's brain?) - are menacingly atmospheric, the lighting and camerawork are worthy of Mario Bava, and the close-ups of actors' eyes and a murder in which the victim's intestines briefly spill out recall Fulci's best excesses. Giorgio Gaslini's score includes the kind of appealing motifs which are rich with female vocals, anticipating his contribution to the following year's **So Sweet, So Dead**.

Unfortunately, the film opens with a curious and rather off-putting ditty which would have been more appropriate in a TV show for children rather than a thriller. Once past this and the power boat race which follows, you can immerse yourself in another gratifying tale of deceit, double-cross and murder.

Video:

Italy: Normale Home Video - 84m, letterboxed; GVR General Video Recording - 82m 05s, letterboxed, grainy print as **Un omicidio perfetto a termine di legge**.

CRY OUT IN TERROR

La morte accarezza a mezzanotte ('Deathresses at Midnight')

La muerte acaricia a medianoche (Spain)

1972 Italy/Spain Technicolor Techniscope 84m

Production Company: Cinecompany (Rome)/C.B. Films (Madrid)

Director: Luciano Ercoli

Producer: Alberto Pugliese, Luciano Ercoli

Story: Sergio Corbucci

Script: May [Menahaem] Velasco, Ernesto Meraldi

Additional Dialogue: Guido Leoni

Cinematography: Fernando Arribas

Editor: Angelo Curi

Art Director: Francisco Di Stefano, Juan Alberto

Music and Music Director: Gianni Ferrio

Song: 'Valentina' theme sung by Mina

Assistant Director: May [Menahaem] Velasco, Luigi Oliviero

Cast: Susan Scott [Nieves Navarro] (*Valentina*), Simon Andreu (*Gio Baldi*), Peter Martell [Pietro Martellanza] (*Stefano, a sculptor*), Carlo Gentili [Inspector Seripa], Ivano Staccioli, Fabrizio Faresco (*Pepito*), Claudio Pellegrini, Luciano Rossi (*giggling killer*), Raul Aparici (*second*), Claudie Lange (*Veruska*), Alessandro Nivola, Elio Veller, Giuliana Rivera, Anna Chimuzzi Pajarito, Guido Spadea, Franco Meraldi, Giorgio Penna, Giacomo Pergola, Accerta Cifarelli, Danilo Bellucci.

Valentina, a successful model, agrees to try a carcinogenic drug as part of a scientific experiment. While under the influence she experiences a vision of a man in sunglasses mechanically murdering a woman with a spiked glove. The police interrogate the distressed model because a woman was recently butchered in a very similar manner in a vacant apartment. The killer lures Valentina to the aforementioned apartment and she narrowly escapes with her life. Veruska, a wealthy and attractive woman, persuades Valentina to help find her missing sister but the resulting journey to an asylum raise more questions than it answers. Later, whilst returning from the asylum, Valentina spots the killer in another car. Further attempts are made on the model's life but she discovers that she is being stalked by two unpleasant thugs. The corpses begin to pile up and the plot thickens...

From Maurizio Pradeaux's **Death Carries A Case** (1972) and **Death Walks In High Heels** (1971) there seemed to be an attempt to launch Susan Scott (Luciano Ercoli's wife) as a female giallo heroine, perhaps to rival Edwige Fenech. However, unlike the harrowing experiences endured by Fenech in her various *giallo* outings, this incredibly convoluted vehicle for Miss Scott's obvious talents at times seems like it has just emerged from the pages of a *fumetti* comic book via a reflection in Hitchcock's **Rear Window**. As if to emphasize the cartoon approach the film has an over-the-rooftops fight sequence and is laced with the kind of black humour found in some westerns. It therefore comes as no surprise that the (frankly risible) scenes emanated from spaghetti specialist Sergio Corbucci (who went on to parody the genre properly with **Giallo Napoletano**). Although spunky Susan is chased and menaced throughout the film we never really believe that she will come to any lasting harm, whilst her frequent playful skirmishes with Simon Andreu's chain-smoking journalist mark him out as the film's eventual hero. Nonetheless, this is an enjoyable and engaging *giallo* which benefits from a seductive title theme, 'Valentina'.

Soundtrack:

Var Right Tempo LP (with gatefold sleeve) and expanded edition CD.

DANGEROUS ATTRACTION

Attrazione pericolosa

1983 Italy Augustus colour 88m

Production Company: Europe Communications

Director: Pierre Le Blanc [Bruno Mattei]

Editor: Giovanni Paolucci

Music: Giovanni Paolucci

Screenplay: Pierre Le Blanc [Bruno Mattei]

Cinematography: Luigi Ciccarese

Art Director: Angela Alterio

Editor: Bruno Mattei

Music: Flipper Music

Assistant Director: Susan J. Adler

Cast: Monique Seller (*Emma De Molinis*), Gabriele Gori (*Carlo Monti*), Tracy Kelly (*Paola Annoni*), Anthony Zequila (*Antonio*), Anthony Berner (*Professor Lo Verso*), David Warbeck (*Lanfranco De Molinis*).

A film student, Carlo Monti, is writing his thesis on Lanfranco De Molinis, an actor-director of 'B' movies who died in a recent car accident. In order to get closer to his subject matter, Carlo contacts the director's attractive daughter, Emma, and pretends to be her long lost brother. They begin a relationship which, if they were really brother and sister, would be incestuous. Lanfranco suddenly re-appears and admits that he faked his own death.

Unfortunately, the director also reveals his dark side: he is an uncontrollable alcoholic who sexually abuses his daughter. The disaffected student resolves to shoot Lanfranco but is shocked to discover that Emma is far from the innocent she seems. In reality, she is having a lesbian affair with Carlo's lecturer Paola. Furthermore, Emma and Paola are planning to kill both Carlo and Lanfranco and make off with the latter's money...

Even by Bruno Mattei's standards (the man responsible for **SS Girls**, **The Other Hell** and **Caligula and Messalina**), this *giallo* has a minuscule budget. It is perhaps to producer Giovanni Paolucci and Mattei's credit that even when it seemed impossible to raise finance for Italian exploitation productions they came up with this audacious attempt to cash-in on the video market for erotic mysteries (the sexual violence in which Italian film-makers specialised having now become Hollywood's province). Unfortunately, the haste with which **Dangerous Attraction** was filmed really shows. David Warbeck disclosed that each shot had to be completed in one take and that script deficiencies resulted in much of the dialogue being improvised. His fans would no doubt relish the opportunity to see him as the deranged director (the film remains unreleased) but the lack of preparation allows him to give full reign to some cringe-worthy hamming. Ultimately, the role-playing, double-crossing and sexual shenanigans in this masquerade are appealingly daft, but seem less credible due to the threadbare production values.

DANGEROUS WOMEN

Le diaboliche ('The Diabolical Ones')

Allein und Angeliefert (Germany 'Alone and Had It')

1989 Italy colour

Production Company: Flying Films/Colours Films/Luigi Russo Produzione

Director: Luigi Russo

Story and Screenplay: Luigi Russo

Cinematography: Luigi Russo

Editor: Luigi Russo

Music: Luigi Ceccarelli

Cast: Lisbeth Hummel, Pierangelo Pozzato, Beatrice Palme, Giulia Urso.

A wheelchair-bound heiress is the victim of an inheritance plot instigated by her greedy maid and volatile chauffeur, who are lovers. The victim's nurse seems to be the only one who can save her but she too joins the plotters. However, there is a twist...

This lacklustre production uses ideas from previous films such as Hammer's **Taste of Fear** and **Formula for a Murder** to little effect, whilst the protracted scenes of the disabled heroine (Hummel) pulling herself around her mansion recall the most potent murder in **The Fifth Cord**. Unfortunately, like Hummel's (increasingly ingenious) attempts to crawl her way out of danger, **Dangerous Women** moves along at a snail's pace. Furthermore, by setting most of the 'action' (using the term in the broadest sense) within the confines of a large

house, Russo creates an uncomfortably claustrophobic atmosphere, which makes the film an endurance test. The one notable scene, in which the disabled victim is repeatedly assaulted with her own wheelchair via point-of-view shots, is gratifyingly tasteless (in keeping with the genre's proclivities) and reasonably effective. It is difficult to assess the performances of the protagonists - so essential when there are only four main cast members on screen - in the German language version under review.

Video:

Japan: label unknown - full screen as **Dangerous Women**.

THE DARK IS DEATH'S FRIEND

L'assassino e' costretto ad uccidere ancora

('The Killer is Forced to Kill Again')

Il ragno (Italy: alternate title 'The Spider')

Il ragno - L'assassino e' costretto ad uccidere ancora (Italy: video sleeve re-title)

La morte e' come un ragno (Italy: alternate production title?)

La arana (Spain 'The Spider')

1975 Italy/France Technicolor Techniscope 89m

Production Company: Albione Cinematografica (Milan)/Git International Film (Milan)/Paris Cannes Production (Paris)

Director: Luigi Cozzi

Executive Producer: Giuseppe Tortorella

Story and Screenplay: Luigi Cozzi, Daniele Del Giudice

Additional Dialogue: Adriano Bolzoni

Cinematography: Riccardo Pallotini

Editor: Alberto Moro

Art Director: Luciana Schiratti

Music: Nando De Luca

Assistant Director: Luciano Sacripanti

Cast: George Hilton (*Mainardi*), Michel Antoine (*the killer*), Femi Benussi (*blonde*), Cristina Galbo (*Laura*), Eduardo Fajardo (*police inspector*), Teresa Velasquez (*Nora Mainardi*), Alessio Orano (*Luca*), Dario Griachi, Luigi Antonio Guerra, Carla Mancini, Sydne Rome.

Mainardi, a womanizer, plans to rid himself of his wealthy wife Nora. He happens to see a sinister figure disposing of a body and seizes the opportunity to make a deal in which the killer will murder Nora. The deed is done but a young couple, Luca and Laura, unwittingly steal the killer's car, complete with Nora's corpse in the boot. They head for the beach and break

Greek video sleeve for 'The Dark is Death's Friend'



into an abandoned old house. The killer tracks them down and while Luca is out having sex with a blonde stranger, he terrorises and rapes Laura. When the young man and the blonde turn up for a threesome they are both quickly despatched. After a struggle, Laura manages to fatally wound her attacker. Back in the city, the police become increasingly suspicious of Mainardi...

Those who have only seen Luigi Cozzi's entertaining but shallow sci-fi, fantasy and horror pics may find **The Dark is Death's Friend** a genuine surprise. This downbeat thriller has a cynical tone which is best illustrated when Orano and Benussi's lustful encounter in the back seat of a car is juxtaposed with a vicious rape scene involving Antoine and Galbo. Moreover, the three male protagonists are each shown to be exploiters of women: Mainardi is a philanderer who plots the death of his wife at the same time as having sex with her; the hired killer also turns out to be a sadistic rapist; and Luca, the 'hero' figure, is a two-faced user who is content to get his leg over with any woman. Nando De Luca's score makes effective use of discordant electric guitar strokes to increase the unsettling atmosphere. Luciana Schiratti's art direction effectively contrasts the Mainardi's ultra-modern, bright yellow (*giallo*) apartment with the dusty, dilapidated house by the sea ('Dracula's castle' comments Luca), even though both locations are the settings for violent death. Finally, the leads are all convincing, especially grim-faced Antoine (who later played the tortured painter at the start of **The Beyond**).

Video:

Greece: VCI - Video City International/Cinehollywood - 86m 34s, full screen, English language, Greek subtitles as **The Dark is Death's Friend**.
Italy: Italtvideo; De Laurentis - 85m 56s, full screen, the credits are in English with a superimposed video title **l'assassino e' costretto ad uccidere ancora**; De Laurentis - 86m 37s, letterboxed as **Il ragno**; Cosmo Video - 85m 55s letterboxed, excellent quality, with sleeve title **Il ragno - L'assassino e' costretto ad uccidere ancora** and cheap artwork depicting a half-human, half-insect skull.
Venezuela: label unknown - English language.

DATE FOR A MURDER

Omicidio per appuntamento ('Appointment for Murder')

Rendezvous Met de Dood (Holland: video sleeve title)

1967 Italy/Germany Technicolor Techniscope 105m

Production Company: Discobolo Film (Rome)/Parnass Film (Munich)

Director: Mino Guerrini

Producer: Liliana Biancini

Story: based on *'Tempo di massacro'* by Franco Enna

Screenplay: Fernando Di Leo, Mino Guerrini

Cinematography: Franco Delli Colli

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Art Director Alberto Boccianti with the collaboration of Renzo Bonechi

Music: Ivan Vandro

Assistant Directors: Fabrizio Gianni, Renzo Genta

Cast: George [Giorgio] Ardisson (*Vince Dreyser*), Ella Karin (*Fidelia Forrester*), Gunther M. Stoll (*Inspector Silvio Giunta*), Hans von Borsody (*Professor Walter Dempsey*), Mario Brega (*Mario Galante, garage owner*), Cesare Miceli Picardi, Luciano Rossi (*Massimo Turci*), Bettina Bousch, Bodo Larsen, Peter Martell [Pietro Martellanza], Fanfulla [no surname], Bill Vanders, Mino Guerrini.

Vince Dreyser, an American private eye, bumps into his old school pal Wally. Now a research chemist, his friend is on his way to Rome in order to marry Lidia, an enigmatic Italian. The pair agree to meet up in the city but Wally fails to keep their appointment. Whilst making enquiries about his whereabouts Dreyser is

LA CINITALIA PRESENTA



ROBERT HOFFMAN . SUSAN SCOTT
IN

PASSI DI DANZA SU UNA LAMA DI RASOIO

CON ANUSKA BOROVA • SERAFINO PROFUMO • ANNA LIBERATI • SIMON ANDREU
ROSITA TOROS c.c. • CRISTINA TAMBORRA • NERINA MONTAGNANI • GIOVANNI PULONE c.c.
SALVATORE BORGESE E CON GEORGE MARTIN

REGIA DI MAURIZIO PRADEAUX

MONTE DI ROBERTO PREGADIO

TELEVISIONE NAZIONALE

RAZIONALMUSIC

S.E.F.I. CINEMATOGRAFICA

UNA CO-PRODUZIONE ITALO-ISPANA

P.A.A. (ROMA) - PRODUCCIONES BALCAZAR S.A. (BARCELONA)

TECHNICOLOR - PRESENTATO EASTMANCOLOR

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PRIMA EDIZIONE ITALIANA 1972

Italian locandina for 'Death Carries a Cane'

knocked unconscious by two thugs and left for dead. The detective's investigations are further hampered when he is hired by a rich businessman to look after Fidelia, his frolicsome 'hippy' daughter. It transpires that the wrecked vehicle his buddy hired was tampered with on the

orders of a gangster called Salvatorelli. In a shoot-out, Dreyser kills him but his friend remains missing and the killings continue... Although it begins on a jocular note, **Date for a Murder** quickly develops into a gripping Rome-located *giallo* which anticipates the

urban thrillers of Argento (particularly *The Cat O'Nine Tails*). Giorgio Ardisson's private eye has an ambiguous role (reminiscent of the male leads in film noir and spaghetti westerns) which brings him into conflict with a world-weary police inspector - a good performance from genre regular Gunther M. Stoll - and their volatile alliance is just one of the film's attractions. A playful sub-plot also reveals an intriguing love/hate relationship between Dreyser and Fidelia Forrester which works best when the twosome play an unspoken game before giving in to their obvious desires. The involving storyline is ably supported by Guerrini's direction which is stylish, if occasionally over-wrought (at one point Ardisson and Karin conduct an entire conversation shot through a bunch of flowers!). Arresting images include the beleaguered inspector prostrate in a pile of cow carcasses at an abattoir, and a scene in which Luciano Rossi falls to his death - the viewer is propelled into the fall as the camera descends rapidly down the side of a building before a jolting edit reveals a watermelon on the pavement, dropped by a shocked bystander. Another memorable scene depicts Dempsey being nearly mowed down by a disabled old nutter in a motorised wheelchair. Despite the fact that his identity is somewhat obvious, even the killer has a distinctive look.

Video:

Holland: Video For Pleasure - very slightly letterboxed as *Date for a Murder*; Filmtrust - as *Date for a Murder*.

Soundtrack:

Italy: CAM single.

DEADLY INHERITANCE

Omicidio per vocazione ('Vocation For Murder')

L'assassino ha le mani pulite (re-release title: 'The Killer Has Clean Hands')

Det Forsvundne Lig (Denmark)

Homicide par vocation (France 'Murder By Vocation')

1968 Italy Eastmancolor 81m

Production Company: Semafilm

Director: Vittorio Sindoni

Executive Producer: Marino Vacca

Story: Romano Migliorini, Vittorio Sindoni

Screenplay: Romano Migliorini, Vittorio Sindoni, Aldo Bruno

Cinematography: Ascenzio Rossi

Editor: Maria Schettino

Art Director: Franco Nonnis

Music: Stefano Torossi

Special Effects: Aldo Gasparri

Cast: Tom Drake (*Inspector Gerard Greville*),

Femi (Eufemia) Benussi (*Simone*), Ernesto Colli

(*Janot*), Isarco Ravaioli (*Jules*), Valeria Ciangottini (*Colette*), Virginio Gazzolo (*Etienne*), Andrea Fantasia (*Notary*), Ivo Garrani (*Leon*), Jeanette Len (Giovanna Lenzi) (*Rosalie*), Aurelio Marconi (*Ururao*), Nicolas Solari (*Becchino*), Aldo Bruno (*Andre*), Alessandra Maravia (*Natalie*), Silvano Spadaccino (*lorry driver*), Sergio Baldacchino (*Job*), Arnaldo De Angelis (*Oscar*), Giacomo Ricci (*police officer*).

In provincial France, an old man named Oscar is run down by a train in a bizarre accident. His will reveals that he had a small fortune, however his family have to wait for their inheritance until the youngest son, a simpleton called Janot, reaches his twenty-first birthday. Soon afterwards, Janot is dismembered in another railway 'accident'. The police, led by Inspector Greville, become increasingly suspicious, especially when Rosalie and her coarse husband Leon also meet untimely deaths. Colette, the youngest family member, is the next victim, stalked and killed by an unseen figure. The police comb the countryside but the mysterious killer remains at large...

Although the *giallo* is essentially an urban genre, thrillers located in the countryside (such as Avati's *La casa dalle finestre che ridono*) can be unnervingly effective. Unfortunately, *Deadly Inheritance* is not one of them. This drab mystery, which marked Sindoni's directorial debut, has a distinctly old-fashioned flavour recalling movies from the Forties and Fifties, it also features some of the worst interior decor in any Italian production. Nevertheless, there are minor flourishes of style, such as a scene shot from the killer's point-of-view in which a blonde female victim is beaten to death with a golf club. The cast includes Tom Drake, who was in American junk like *House of the Black Death*, Giovanna Lenzi, later in *The Crimes of the Black Cat* and director of the dreadful *Delitti*, and creepy-looking Ernesto Colli, who provides the film's only real point of interest. He later turned up in *Torso* and *Autopsy*.

Video:

France: label unknown.

Greece: labels unknown - released on two different labels.

Italy: AVO Film - 75m 56s, nearly full screen, taken from a damaged print as *L'assassino ha le mani pulite* (*Omicidio per vocazione*).

DEATH CARRIES A CANE

Passi di danza su una lama di rasoio

('Dance Steps on the Edge of a Razor')

Pasos de danza sobre el filo de una navaja (Spain)

Chasse croises sur une lame de rasoir (Belgium and France)

Devil Blade (Belgium and France: video sleeve re-title)

Morkets Raedsler (Denmark 'Horrors of the Dark')

Murhaaja Pukeutui Mustaan (Finland: video sleeve title)

Die Nacht der Rollenden Kopfe (Germany 'The Night of the Rolling Heads')

A morte traz uma bengala (Portugal)

Maniac at Large (USA)

The Tormentor (USA: video re-title)

1972 Italy/Spain Technicolor Eastmancolor scope 91m

Production Company: SEFI Cinematografica (Rome)/Producciones Balcazar (Barcelona)

Director: Maurizio Pradeaux

Executive Producer: Francisco Balcazar

Story: Arpad De Riso, Maurizio Pradeaux

Screenplay: Arpad De Riso, Maurizio Balcazar,

Alfonso Balcazar, Jorge Martin

Cinematography: Jaime Deu Casas

Editor: Enzo Alabiso

Art Director: Juan Alberto Soler

Music: Roberto Pregadio

Asst Director: Federico Canudas, Giuseppe Esposito

Cast: Robert Hoffman (*Alberto Morosini*), Susan Scott [Nieves Navarro] (*Kitty*), George [Jorge] Martin (*Inspector Merughi*), Anuska Borova (*Sylvia Arrighi and Lidia Arrighi, her twin*)



Spanish press sheet for 'Death Carries a Cane'

stars: Serafino Profumo, Simon Andreu (Marco), Anna Liberati, Rosita Toros, Cristina Tamborra, Nerina Montagnani, Orlando Baralla, Giovanni Pulone, Salvatore Borgese (Paletto), Rodolfo Lolli, Carlo Carli, Luciano Rossi (Richard, Sylvia's boyfriend).

Rome: While waiting for her boyfriend Alberto at an observation point overlooking the city, Kitty peers through a coin-operated telescope and is shocked to see a woman being knifed to death by a black-clad figure. Initially, the police doubt her story but the woman's corpse is eventually discovered. A chestnut vendor who was near the scene of the crime is soon razed to death and a chain of murders is set in motion. The police deduce that the crimes are linked with those of two female dancers. Alberto becomes the main suspect and attempts to clear his name, however the killer continues to remove all those who could reveal his/her identity...

This is a breathtakingly manipulative *giallo* in which everyone (over)acts suspiciously and seems to have a motive for murder. Robert Hoffman (A Black Veil For Lisa; Naked Girl Killed in Park; Spasmo) gets star red herring treatment as Scott's boyfriend; not only does he have a limp like the killer, he just happens to spend his time stabbing mannequins in preparation for a performance art exhibit and, naturally, wears a black hat. Simon Andreu plays an obsessive film composer who is revealed to be impotent - where have we heard that before? Even the police chief, who falls into a trap when he attempts to pick up Scott disguised as a prostitute, carries a cane! Unfortunately, as the only major character who obviously isn't the killer, talented Scott does little more than provide nudity and scream when necessary. Notwithstanding its gall, this shallow exercise does have its moments and Pradeaux films the violent incidents with enough verve to offset the lack of potency in the plot: the candle-lit slashing of a cleaning lady is strikingly presented; the murder of a dancer (smothered with a pillow before having her stomach razored open) is preceded by unnerving shots from under her bed which represent the killer's point-of-view; and the torch-lit climax in a greenhouse is a barrage of quick edits and half-seen glimpses of the killer. The lowpoint is an extended sequence in which the amateur sleuths attempt to find clues at a dance academy. As usual, the killer's motive is patently unconvincing (even by the standards of the genre) and in view of the plethora of red herrings, who all have better incentives to kill, only serves to make this production seem even more cynical. Finally, the presence of a depend-



'Death Knocks Twice'

able genre composer like Morricone is sorely missed because Roberto Pregadio's piano-based score, which incorporates the sound of a street organ, really grates on the nerves.

Video:

Belgium and France: UVP - 86m 57s, slightly letterboxed, mediocre duplication as *Chasses croisées sur une lame de rasoir* with sleeve title *Devil Blade*.

Denmark: IT Videocollection - 86m 27s, letterboxed with sleeve title *Morkets Raedster*.

Finland: Curly Video - 86m 35s, slightly letterboxed, Finnish subtitles as *Death Carries a Cane*.

Italy: Kineo - 87m 15s as *Passi di danza su una lama di rasoio*.

Japan: label unknown - as *Death Carries a Cane*.

Portugal: Filmitalus.

Sweden: Baroness - letterboxed as *Death Carries a Cane*.

USA: Wizard - 90m 41s, full screen, large cardboard box as *The Tormentor*.

DEATH KNOCKS TWICE

La morte busa due volte

Blonde Koder fur den Morder (Germany 'Blonde Bait For the Murderer')

La mort sonne toujours deux fois (France) Blonde lokvogel voor een moordenaar (Belgium and Holland)

1969 Italy/Germany Eastmancolor 86m Production Company: P.A.C. Produzione Atlas Cinematografica (Rome)/Maris Film (Munich) Director: Harald Philip

Story: Max Pierre Scheffer, Sergio Garrone Screenplay: Harald Philip, Sergio Garrone, Mario Di Nardo

Cinematography: Claudio Racca

Art Director: Giorgio Bini, Nicola Tamburro

Editor: Alfred Srp

Music: Piero Umiliani

Assistant Director: Adriana Del Carlo, Mauro Sacripanti

Cast: Dean Reed (Bob Martin), Fabio Testi (Francesco Villaverde), Leon Askin (Peppe Carter), Ini Assmann (Helen), Werner Peters (Charley Hemman), Riccardo Garrone (Armando Locatelli), Mario Brega (Riccardo Nanno), Helen Chanel (Angela), Femi (Eufemia) Benussi (bar client), Renato Baldini (Mr. Simmons), Teodoro Agrimi Corra', Antonietta Fiorito, Lanfranco Cobiainchi, Tom Felleghy [Tomasso Felleghi] (Berry), Bruno Arie' (a 'goril la'), Helmut Bein, Nadja Tiller (Maria Villaverde), Anita Ekberg (Mrs Sofia Ferretti), Adolfo Celi (The Professor, alias Max Spiegler), alsatian dog (Fritz)



Dutch video sleeve: 'Death Knocks Twice'

Hunky Francesco Villaverde strangles Lois Simmonds, the attractive young wife of a wealthy businessman, after they have made love on the beach. The murder is witnessed by two men who work for a local gangster. The latter wants to acquire a valuable piece of property owned by the Villaverdes and soon begins to blackmail Francesco's wife Maria. Meanwhile, two employees of a detective agency, Peppe Carter and Bob Martin, are hired to investigate the murder. In the hope of entrapping Francesco (who is revealed to have a history of mental illness), Martin's fiancée Helen is roped into masquerading as the daughter of a rich American. The tension builds when two unscrupulous individuals representing 'The Organisation' become involved and Helen's life is placed in danger...

When is a murder not a murder? When the murder's in a *giallo*, of course. This intriguing premise opens **Death Knocks** but having announced its arrival so strikingly, the film soon begins to meander. Flatly directed by German Harald Philip, the main body of the film is reminiscent of an old episode of **The Saint**, partly because the exotic locations are combined with intrigue, gorgeous gals and poorly choreographed fight scenes, but also because Dean Reed has a passing resemblance to Simon Templar. Having finally convinced myself that, no matter how many villains he beats up, an animated halo was never going to appear above Reed's head, it came as a real shock when the film suddenly transmuted into **Lassie**! Midway through, a highly devoted alsatian dog runs kilometre after kilometre to save Simon Templar, er Bob Martin, from the ravages of the mid-day sun. After this silliness, any twist of the plot comes as no surprise. To be fair, **Death Knocks Twice** has some agreeable moments of twisted sexuality and the sight of youthful hunk Fabio Testi strangling man-hungry Anita Ekberg is deliciously decadent. The opening and closing ballads 'My Face' and 'Un posto per un addio', are also surprisingly appealing.

Video:

Belgium and Holland: Van Gils/Palma Video - 81m 36s, full screen as **Death Knocks Twice**. France: VIP; Scherzo. Both as **La mort sonne toujours deux fois**.

Italy: Center Video - as **La morte bussa due volte**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Cinevox LP with thirteen tracks; Easy Tempo Vol.3 CD - this compilation contains themes

Death Laid an Egg.



'Death Laid an Egg'

DEATH LAID AN EGG

La morte ha fatto l'uovo

La mort a pondu un oeuf (France)

Le sadique de la chambre 24 (France: re-title)

Kuolemen Ansa (Finland: video sleeve title)
A Curious Way To Love (UK: theatrical title)
Plucked (USA)

Death Trap (alternate English language title)
1967 Italy/France Eastmancolor 110m
Production Company: Summa
Cinematografica/Cine Azimut (Rome)/Les Films Corona (Paris)

Director: Giulio Questi

Story and Screenplay: Giulio Questi, Franco Arcalli

Cinematography: Dario Di Palma

Editor: Franco Arcalli

Art Director: Sergio Canevari

Music and Music Director: Bruno Maderna

Assistant Director: Mario Pippa

Cast: Gina Lollobrigida (*Anna*), Jean-Louis Trintignant (*Marco*), Ewa Aulin (*Gabrielle*), Jean Sobieski (*Mondaini*), Renato Romano (*Luigi*), Giulio Donnini (*hotel manager*), Cleofe Del Cile, Monica Millesi, Vittorio André, Aldo Bonamano, Ugo Arinolfi, Margherita Horowitz, Biagio Peligra, Giuliano Raffaelli, Conrad Andersen, Giancarlo Sisti, Livio Ferrero, Jean Rougel, Barbara Pignalon, Mario Giuzzardi, Lina De Filippo.

At a busy highway motel various guests are seen in their rooms. In one, a middle-aged man prepares to commit suicide and, in another, a

young man listens to the sound of a couple having sex in the adjacent room. Hoping to gain a view of the action he climbs out onto the balcony and is shocked to see a woman being knifed to death by a black-gloved killer. The murderer is Marco, who runs a completely automated chicken farm with his ambitious wife Anna. She is jealous of their personal assistant Gabrielle and suspects that her husband is having an affair with the youthful beauty (which he is). Mondaini, the young man who witnessed the murder, turns out to be a publicity agent assigned to work with Marco by an association which seeks to promote poultry. Meanwhile, a scientist manages to breed wingless and headless chickens to reduce costs and increase profits. Marco rejects the mutations as 'monsters' and is unimpressed by Mondaini's schemes. Moreover, he is also trying to kill his wife...

Compelling, but occasionally infuriating, Questi's incredible film demands repeated viewings and a major article to do it justice. The stunning opening sequence is, in itself, a masterly creation. It's a rapidly edited montage of images which contrasts the mundane acts of everyday life with a briefly glimpsed 'sex murder' (later revealed to be something quite different, but equally perverse). The influence of nouvelle-vague French director Jean-Luc Godard is obvious, particularly during a brief, sharply edited flashback which shows Gabrielle's parents killed in a **Weekend**-like road accident, and there are also nods to Bunuel (scenes in which bourgeois guests at a party attempt to redefine themselves). The

revolting headless and wingless 'chickens' add a touch of pointed horror to the film, similar to the effect of the gruesome half-man, half-pig in Lindsay Anderson's *O Lucky Man*. By highlighting the vileness of factory farming, the film also proved to be ahead of its time. Bruno Maderna's cacophonous score is in tune with the extraordinary visuals; unfortunately it becomes intrusive after a while.

Video:

Denmark: DVS - as *Dodsfaelden* with subtitle *Death Trap*.

Finland: United Film - 86m 38s, masked as *Death Laid an Egg* with title *Death Trap*.

Greece: AVC/Video Movies - 86m 32s, full screen, Greek subtitles as *Death Laid an Egg*;

Italy: Technofilm - 86m 34s (shots of chickens being strangled and eviscerated have been cut) as *La morte ha fatto l'uovo*.

Venezuela: Thames Video - in English with Spanish subtitles as *Death Laid an Egg* with sleeve title *Placer de la muerte*.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Cinevox LP with thirteen tracks.

DEATH OCCURRED LAST NIGHT

La morte risale a ieri sera

La mort remonte a hier soir (France 'Death Occurred Last Evening')

Das Grauen Kam aus dem Nebel (Germany 'The Horror Comes Out of the Fog')

Death Took Place Last Night (USA)

1970 Italy/West Germany Technostampa Eastmancolor 98m

Production Company: Lombard Film (Milan)/Filmes Cinematografica (Rome)/C.C.C. Filmkunst (Berlin)

Director: Duccio Tessari

Producer: Giuseppe Tortorella

Story: Biagio Proietti, Duccio Tessari based on the novel 'I milanesi ammazzano al sabato' by Giorgio Scerbanenco

Screenplay: Biagio Proietti, Duccio Tessari with the collaboration of Arthur (Artur) Brauner

Cinematography: Lamberto Caimi

Editor: Mario Morra

Art Director: Enrico Tovagliari

Music and Music Director: Gianni Ferrio

Assistant Director: Lorella De Luca

Cast: Raf Vallone (*Amanzio Berzaghi*), Frank Wolff (*Inspector Duca Lamberti*), Gabriele Tinti (*Mascaranti, Lamberti's assistant*), Gillian Bray (*Donatella Berzaghi*), Eva Renzi (*Livia*), Gigi



'Death Walks in High Heels'

Rizzi (*Salvatore, an informer*), Beryl Cunningham (*Herrero*), Checco Rissone, Wilma Casagrande (*Concetta*), Marco Mariani, Nicky Zuccola', Helga Machaty, Riccardo De Stefanis, Maria Grazia Bettini, Elsa Boni, Marisa Cassetta, Giorgio Dolfi, Jack La Cayen, Stefano Oppedisano, Renato Tovagliari.

Amanzio Berzaghi informs the police that his twenty-five year-old daughter Donatella has disappeared from their apartment. Suspecting that the young woman may have been abducted for prostitution (she is physically normal but has the mental age of a small child), Inspector Lamberti investigates further. He quizzes pimps, prostitutes and their clients and discovers that the victim was kidnapped by two men and a woman. Meanwhile, Donatella's body is eventually found in a field. It emerges that the callous kidnappers sold the innocent woman as a sex object and then disposed of her when the investigation began. The discovery of the victim's teddy bear leads her father to the killers... *Death Occurred Last Night* has a unique story and a straightforward detection framework. There are no red herrings, plot twists or black-clad assassins. However, the motives and actions of the killers are as repulsive as any within the genre. It is to Tessari's credit that,

despite the sleaze possibilities offered by an investigation which focuses around whores and brothels, he resists temptation and includes hardly any female nudity. Instead, the viewer's attention is focused on the parallel enquiries being made by the police and the grieving father - thereby allowing speculation as to who will reveal the truth first. The strong cast includes the ever-reliable Frank Wolff as an off-beat police inspector, a youthful Gabriele Tinti (future husband of Laura Gemser) as his sidekick and Beryl Cunningham (previously in *The Sweet Body of Deborah* and *The Weekend Murders*) as an alcoholic working girl. Gianni Ferrio contributes a 'smorgasbord' score which utilises several different musical styles and thankfully avoids the usual ploy of film composers, namely repeating a catchy main theme via numerous variations.

Video:

Italy: Creazioni Home Video - 93m 17s, full screen, with a small CHV on-screen logo as *La morte risale a ieri sera*; Mondadori - full screen as *La morte risale a ieri sera*.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Cinevox LP with sixteen tracks

DEATH STEPS IN THE DARK

Passi di morte perduti nel buio ('Death Steps Lost in the Dark')

Death Steps (Holland: video sleeve title)

Pasos de muerte en la oscuridad (Spain)

Dodskappen (Sweden: video title)

1976 Italy/Greece Technicolor Eastmancolor 94m

Production Company: Salaria/R.C.R.

Cinematografica (Rome)/D. Dimitriadis (Athens)

Director: Maurizio Pradeaux

Story and Screenplay: Arpad de Riso, Maurizio Pradeaux

Cinematography: Aldo Ricci

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Director: Giovanni Fratalocchi

Music: Riz Ortolani

Assistant Director: Barbara Maimone

Cast: Leonard Mann (Leonardo Manzella)

Luciano, Robert Webber (police inspector),

Vera Kruska (Ingrid), Nino Maimone, Barbara

Seidel, Imelde Marani, Albertina Capuani,

Nazzareno Macri, Luigi Romano, Bartolillo

Palma, Susy Jennings.

Luciano, an Italian journalist, is travelling on the Istanbul-Athens express. When the train emerges from the darkness of a tunnel the passengers in his carriage are shocked to discover that a woman has been killed. The murder weapon is Luciano's envelope opener so naturally he is the main suspect. He sets out to

prove his innocence and catch the real culprit. Along the way he's helped by Ingrid, his Swedish girlfriend, and a petty criminal. Coming at the end of the main *giallo* cycle (by 1976 Italian audiences' affections had switched to violent cop thrillers), this is an unwelcome and uninspiring entry from Maurizio Pradeaux. Unfortunately, **Death Steps in the Dark** takes no new steps itself, as the director lazily recycles various elements from his own **Death Carries a Cane** such as an extended sequence in which the amateur detectives break into a house. Pradeaux includes a couple of extreme razor murders and a lesbian groping filmed in close-up, in the hope that these exploitative images will make up for the lack of ideas. Perhaps aware that they were hanging onto the coat-tails of a film fashion which needed some fresh lustre (**Tenebrae** was to be the super-model the genre needed), the film-makers resort to unnecessary attempts at slapstick humour and a climactic unmasking which is laughably preposterous. On a final sour note, Riz Ortolani's musical contribution is deliberately dour, lacking the glossy veneer that characterises the essential thriller scores.

Video:

Holland: Phoenix/Eagle 6 - 91m 17s, letterboxed (except for opening credits) as **Death Steps in the Dark**.

Sweden: Baroness - as **Death Steps in the Dark**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero CD 'Murder For Pleasure

Giallo and Thriller Themes - title theme

Fantafestival CD - title theme.

DEATH WALKS IN HIGH HEELS

La morte cammina con i tacchi alti

La muerte camina con tacon alto (Spain)

Nuits d'amour et d'epouvante (France)

La mort marche a talons haut (France: alternate title)

Death Stalks in High Heels (UK: theatrical title)

1971 Italy/Spain Technochrome Cromoscope 105m

Production Company: Cinecompany

(Rome)/C.C. Atlantida (Madrid)

Director: Luciano Ercoli

Producer: Alberto Pugliese, Luciano Ercoli

Story: Ernesto Gastaldi, May Velasco, Dino Verde

Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi, May Velasco

Cinematography: Fernando Arribas

Editor: Pedro Del Rey

Art Director: Giuseppe Scalisi

Music and Music Director: Stelvio Cipriani

Cast: Frank Wolff (Robert Matthews), Susan

Scott (Nieves Navarro) (Nicole), Simon Andreu

(Michel Amont), Carlo Gentili (Inspector

Spanish press-book for 'Death Walks in High Heels'

LA MORTE CAMMINA CON I TACCHI ALTI

Technochrome

starring

FRANK WOLFF

SUSAN SCOTT

SIMON ANDREU

CARLO GENTILI - FABRIZIO MORESCO

A.M. MARTIN - GEORGE RIGAUD

LUCIANO ROSSI

and with

CLAUDIE LANGE

Director

LUCIANO ERCOLI

Screenplay by

ERNESTO CASTALDI - MAY VELASCO

Cinematography by

ANGELO CURI

Music by

STELVIO CIPRIANI

Production manager

Produced by

LUCIANO ERCOLI - ALBERTO PUGLIESE

by

CINECOMPANY - C.C. ATLANTIDA, Madrid

**RIZZOLI
FILM**



Matthews), George [Jorge] Rigaud (*Lenny*), José Manuel Martín (*Smith*), Fabrizio Moresco (*Berenson*), Luciano Rossi (*Hallory*), Claudie Lange (*Vanessa Matthews*), Rachela Pamenti (*Penny Parker*).

On an overnight train, a man named Rochard is stabbed to death. His daughter Nicole, a famous Parisienne stripper, is quizzed by the police about a cache of missing diamonds. Nicole lives with Michel, who is prone to violent fits of jealousy, but she also has a devoted admirer, an English eye surgeon called Robert Matthews. Having been subjected to a series of threatening 'phone calls and physically assaulted in her bedroom by a masked stranger, Nicole leaves in a panic and takes solace in Richard's arms. The pair travel to England but Michel follows, and a tangled web of intrigue and murder is enacted in a quiet coastal village...

Death Walks in High Heels overstates its welcome and positively revels in one of the genre's most contrived storylines but somehow gets away with it, leaving the viewer scratching their head in disbelief whilst nonetheless entertained. Stand-out scenes depict Susan Scott being terrorised by a masked intruder with piercing blue eyes, and her subsequent realisation that her slimy boyfriend (Simon Andreu in yet another villainous role) has blue contact lenses. The nightmare of being threatened by one's own sexual partner is a recurring theme in *gialli* (reaching a sleazy zenith in the bondage scene in which a hand-cuffed nymphomaniac panics when she realises that the man besides her might be **The New York Ripper**) and this film exploits that fear mercilessly. Moreover, **Death Walks** has a good cast of strolling players which includes genre giants Frank Wolff and Susan Scott, plus habitual red herrings like Jorge Rigaud (**Perché...**

Jennifer; The Ice Pick, Wide-Eyed in the Dark) and Luciano Rossi (**So Sweet, So Dead; Cry Out in Terror**). The English seaside locations also add a certain Hitchcockian quaintness to the foul play.

Italy: Creazioni Home Video - 102m 14s, full screen, good quality, with a tiny on-screen logo as **La morte cammina con i tacchi alti**
Spain: Video M30 - letterboxed as **La muerte camina con tacon alto**.

DEEP RED

Profondo rosso

Les frissons de l'angoisse (France 'The Shudder of Anguish')

Rosso - Die Farbe des Blutes (Germany 'Red - The Colour of Blood')

Rosso - Farbe des Todes (Germany: alternate title 'Red - The Colour of Death')

David Hemmings in 'Deep Red'



Both above from 'Deep Red'

Bloedlink (Holland 'Blood Link')

Suspiria 2 (Japan)

Rojo oscuro (Spain 'Dark Red')

Deep Red - The Hatchet Murders (USA)

The Hatchet Murders (USA)

La tigre dai denti a sciabola ('The Sabre-Toothed Tiger' - pre-production title)

1975 Italy Eastmancolor Techniscope 126m

Production Company: Seda Spettacoli

Produzione for Rizzoli Films

Director: Dario Argento

Producer: Salvatore Argento

Story and Screenplay: Dario Argento,

Bernardino Zapponi

Cinematography: Luigi Kuveiller

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Art Directors: Giuseppe Bassan, Maurizio

Garrone

Music: Giorgio Gaslini and Goblin

Assistant Director: Stefano Rocca

Cast: David Hemmings (*Marcus Daly*), Daria

Nicolodi (*Gianna Brezzi*), Gabriele Lavia (*Carlo*),

Carla Calamai (*Marta, Carlo's mother*), Macha

Meril (*Helga Ulmann*), Glauco Mauri (*Professor*

Giordani), Eros Pagni (*Inspector Calabrini*),

Nicoletta Elmi (*Olga Rodi*), Giuliana Calandra

(*Amanda Righetti*), Piero Mazzinghi (*Bardi*),

Fulvio Mingozzi (*agent Mingozzi*), Vittorio

Fanfoni, Dante Fioretti, Geraldine Hooper

(*Massimo Ricci*), Aldo Bonamano (*Carlo's*

father), Liana Del Balzo, Lacopo Mariani, Furio Meniconi, Lorenzo Piani, Salvatore Puntillo (*policeman*), Piero Vida (*fat agent*), Tom [Tomasso] Felleghi (*surgeon*), Attilio Dottasio (*florist*), Mario Scaccia (*man at psychiatric conference*), Salvatore Baccaro (*market trader*), Glauco Onorato (*killer*).

At a parapsychology conference, Helga Ulmann, a famous psychic, is shocked when she becomes aware there is a killer in the auditorium. Terrified, she tells her colleague Professor Giordani that she will reveal the killer's identity to him the next day. That evening, while chatting with his drunken friend Carlo in the piazza outside his home, Marc Daly, an English pianist living in Rome, sees his downstairs neighbour, the aforementioned psychic, being butchered at her window. Marc races up to the woman's apartment but by the time he reaches her she is already dead. The police arrive at the scene, swiftly followed by Gianna Brezzi, a pushy reporter. Later, Marc is convinced that he has overlooked something important in Helga's hallway - something which seemed different - and begins his own investigation. Meanwhile, the killer eliminates all those who might reveal his/her identity... It hardly needs re-stating: **Deep Red** is Argento's masterpiece and a definitive giallo.

The story has echoes of the director's debut **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage**, yet **Deep Red** is a more mature work which has considerably greater depth and power. It is almost as if Argento had taken stock of the explosion of *gialli* which emanated from Italy during the early Seventies and decided that he, the maestro, would show his imitators how it should be done. While re-interpreting some of the classic *giallo* themes (such as a warped childhood experience leading to a disordered adult existence) the director confidently adds a further degree of complexity by incorporating some of Antonioni's traits into the narrative and by casting Hemmings, **Blow Up**'s protagonist. Consequently, the film reveals an attempt to present characters as more than mere ciphers and to question gender roles. There are a number of (seemingly extraneous) scenes involving Hemmings and Nicolodi which add depth to their characters but, in the full Italian version, occasionally lapse into unnecessary humour. Similarly, Marc and Carlo indulge in more than one philosophical discussion about politics and the futility of human existence. Even minor characters, such as Carlo's gay lover, have more depth than the camp stereotypical figure Argento previously presented in **Four Flies**. The film is also even more visually appealing than his previous works: every camera shot seems to have been considered in minute detail and there are some gorgeous compositions which, like the glass-fronted bar Marc frequents, seem to have come from a painting (in this case, one by Edward Hopper). Tracking shots effortlessly glide around the actors, the sets and the architecture, propelling the viewer into Marc's living nightmare. The murders are more brutal and sadistic than those in his previous thrillers and are filmed with gloating relish. Point-of-view shots and the quickening pulse of Gaslini's superb Goblin-charged score each time violence is enacted signal the director's insistence that the viewer must be both an accomplice and a victim of the violence. You can almost feel the butcher's cleaver sinking into the unfortunate psychic and touch the shards of glass which become embedded in her neck; suffer Amanda Righetti's painful drowning in scalding hot bath water (re-enacted more blisteringly in **Halloween II**); and grimace when Giordani's teeth are repeatedly smashed against a mantelpiece and a table. The murders and the weapons used are positively fetishised with seductive close-ups. Despite an occasional lapse - Marc's protracted attempt to seek the truth in the abandoned mansion could have been shorter and the medium's demise at her window is spoiled by an obvious dummy - **Deep Red** is a classic of its kind which requires an arsenal of superlatives to do it justice.

Video:

Australia: 7 Keys; Force - approx. 101m; Cinema Italia - approx. 121m, Italian language, English subtitles - as **Deep Red**.

Denmark: label unknown - approx. 96m, letterboxed as **Deep Red**.

France: VIP 'Genius Collection'; Jet Video; Proserpine Video - full screen, pan and scan. All as **Les frissons de l'angoisse**.

Holland: label unknown - cut, letterboxed as **Deep Red**; Movies Select Video - 100m 27s, widescreen, English language with Dutch subtitles as **Deep Red**.

Italy: Domovideo - 121m 16s, letterboxed, end music cuts abruptly as **Profondo rosso**;

Mondadori - as **Profondo rosso**

Japan: Columbia Video - as **Profondo rosso**.

Sweden: Baroness - cut, full screen as **Deep Red**.

UK: Techno/Fletcher - 100m 32s, letterboxed as **Deep Red**; Redemption - 121m 09s: cut by 11 seconds with a BBFC '18' certificate version - a shot of two dogs fighting (4 seconds) and a shot of a lizard impaled on a needle (7 seconds), Italian language, full screen, English subtitles as **Profondo rosso**.

USA: Thorn-EMI - cut, full screen as **The Hatchet Murders**; Home Vision.

Laserdisc:

Japan: Columbia - approx. 105m, letterboxed,

SERENA GRANDI in



LE FOTO DI GIOIA

con DARIA NICOLodi - VANNI CORBELLINI - DAVID BRANDON
GEORGE EASTMAN

con SABRINA SALERNO nel ruolo di "SABRINA" e con la partecipazione di CAPUCINE
Musiche di SIMON BOSWELL

Una produzione DEVON FILM - DANIA FILM - MEDUSA DISTRIBUZIONE - FILMES INTERNATIONAL
NATIONAL CINEMATOGRAFICA

produttori esecutivi MARCO GRILLO SPINA - MASSIMO MANASSE

Regia di LAMBERTO BAVA

colore della TELECOLOR

DOLBY STEREO
IN THEATRI SELETTI

MEDUSA

English language, Japanese subtitles as **Suspiria 2**; Beam Entertainment 'The Spectral Collection' - Italian language with Japanese subtitles in a double box with **Suspiria**.

DVD:

Japan: Culture Publishers - Italian language as **Profondo rosso**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Cinevox CD; Cinevox CD re-release of complete score; ViViMusica CD - *Music From Dario Argento's Horror Movies* - compilation of themes performed by Claudio Simonetti.
USA: *Giallo Allegro* CD - on a double-bill with **Suspiria**

DELIRIUM**Delirio caldo** ('Hot Delirium')**Au-dela du desir** (France 'Beyond Desire')

1972 Italy Eastmancolor 85m

Production Company: G.R.P. Cinematografica

Director: Ralph Brown [Renato Polselli]

Producer: Mario Maestrelli

Story and Screenplay: Renato Polselli

Cinematography: Ugo Brunelli

Editor: Otello Colangeli

Music: Gianfranco Reverberi

Cast: Mickey Hargitay (*Professor Herbert Lyutak*), Rita Calderoni (*Marcia/Marsha Lyutak*, Herbert's wife), Raoul [surname uncredited] (*Inspector Edwards*), Carmen Young (*Bonita*, the niece), Tano [Gaetano] Cimarosa (*John Lacey*), Krysta Barrymore (*Joaquim*), William Darni (*policeman*), Katia Kardinali (*Miss Heinrich*), Stefano Oppedisano (*bartender*), Steffy Stefen (*Lyutak's student*).

England: Doctor Herbert Lyutak, a criminal psychologist, offers a young woman a lift to a nightclub. When she resists his advances, he chases and beats her to death in a shallow river. Later, his wife Marcia discovers her husband's bloodstained shirt. A young woman is strangled to death in a red telephone box whilst Lyutak is still assisting the police. Clearly, he is not the killer this time. An identity parade is arranged and Lyutak incriminates a small time thief. The psychologist informs the police that he can predict when the next murder will occur and a trap is laid. Miss Heinrich, a friend of the Lyutaks, acts as a decoy for the police by dressing as a prostitute. Unfortunately, a real prostitute who was parading her wares nearby is killed. Miss Heinrich recognises the murder weapon as Herbert's knife and calls his wife with blackmail in mind. She soon receives a visit from a killer who whips and strangles her to death...

Delirium is a classic low-budget, sleazy film which offers the viewer a jaw-dropping barrage of sexual violence. Director Polselli has no qualms about revelling in the sadistic images he depicts: in one outrageous scene the mystery killer whips and actually masturbates one of his naked female victims with a black-gloved hand before strangling her! Some *gialli* attempt to confuse the viewer by having two killers, but **Delirium** manages to outdo them by having three. For although it is obvious from the outset that Lyutak, the psycho psychologist, has an uncontrollable bloodlust, Polselli attempts to make it unclear who is carrying out a spate of complementary killings. And as if the antics of three killers were not enough, the trash auteur includes some acid-tinged nightmare sequences which show Lyutak making up for

Greek video sleeve for Lamberto Bava's 'Delirium'



delirium



Renato Polselli's 'Delirium'

his impotence by abusing and torturing naked women in his cellar. The above synopsis may surprise readers who have seen the version of the film which the director re-edited for the US market at the behest of its American distributors. The original story (unconvincingly) takes place in England, but for the Stateside release Polselli added some poorly matched 'Nam flashbacks to explain Lyutak's actions while removing shots of British bobbies. A comparison of the European and American releases reveals other, more curious, differences. Although the graphic sexual sadism is toned down in the US version, it adds two extra murders not present in the European edit - Lyutak strangles one of his female students and suffocates his niece. The psychologist's demise at the climax is also completely different: in the European version he expires in his cellar following a bloody battle with his spouse and her lesbian lover, while in the US version he even tries to strangle a police inspector and is dramatically gunned down in slow motion as a result (even though the cop-out ending reveals the whole story to have been the delirious nightmare of a dying man). But both versions have a great score and curious cast members. Maitland McDonagh has drawn attention to Argento's ground-breaking use of sympathetic pounding rock whenever there is a hint of violence in **Deep Red**. But transcendental trash auteur Polselli had spotted the sublime connection between screen violence and pulse-racing rock three years previously, when he engaged

the aptly-named Gianfranco Reverberi to send audiences into **Delirium** with a brash score characterized by wild guitars and groovy organ-twiddling. Although he clearly has limited acting ability, Mickey Hargitay ('The Crimson Executioner' in **The Bloody Pit of Horror**) is unforgettable as the lead psycho, alternating between solemnity and manic glee whenever he murders his victims. The only red herring, a petty criminal, is played by Tano Cimarosa, the actor-director with a talent to match his diminutive size (he gave the world the inept **Reflections in Black** and a **Death Wish**-inspired revenger called **Death Hunt**). And whether cavorting with her insane spouse or torturing her maid, Rita Calderoni, Polselli's regular female sexual magnet, gives a splendidly over-the-top eye-rolling performance.

Video:

France: MGTV - 94m 34s, slightly muffled sound, letterboxed, inferior print, with superimposed title **Au-dela du desir**.

Holland: Empire - 82m 14s, full screen, Dutch subtitles, good quality print as **Delirium**.

Italy: Camen C/Hobby Video as **Delirio caldo** (a hyper-rare 1979 release!).

USA: Academy - as **Delirium**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero CD: 'Murder For Pleasure: **Giallo and Thriller Themes**' - the delirious waterfall murder theme (complete with victim's screams) and closing ballad.



DELIRIUM

Le foto di Gioia ('Photos of Gioia')

Das unheimliche auge (Germany 'The Uncanny Eye')

1987 Italy Eastmancolor Telecolor Dolby Stereo 92m

Production Company: Dania Film S.r.l./Devon Film S.r.l./Medusa Distribuzione/National Cinematografica/Filmes International in association with Reteitalia S.p.A.

Director: Lamberto Bava

Executive Producer: Marco Grillo Spina, Romano Manasse

Screenplay: Luciano Martino

Screenplay: Gianfranco Clerici, Daniele Stroppa

Cinematography: Gianlorenzo Battaglia

Editor: Mauro Bonanni

Art Director: Antonello Geleng

Music: Simon Boswell

Assistant Director: Roberto Palmerini

Cast: Serena Grandi [Faggioli] (*Gioia/Gloria*),

Nicolodi (*Evelyn*), Vanni Corbellini (*Tony*),

Brandon (*Roberto, a photographer*),

Eastman [Luigi Montefiore] (*Alex*),

Katrine Michelson, Karl Zinny (*Mark*),

Salemme, Sabrina Salerno (*Sabrina*),

Cine (*Flora*), Loredana Petricca, Lionello

Di Savoia, Beatrice Kruger, Gianni Franco,

Marcia Sedoc, Patricia Boom, Giulio Massimini.

Gioia, a former porno actress, model and now owner of a skin magazine called Pussycat, is contacted on the 'phone by a wheelchair-bound teenager called Mark. After a fashion show at her plush villa, one of the models is killed to death with a pitchfork by a blonde woman. Gioia is alerted to the murder by a letter from Mark, but when she investigates, the letter has vanished from her swimming pool; she concludes it was one of his pathetic jokes. However, the killer sends a macabre photo of the victim to Gioia and her corpse is later found in a roadside dustbin. Tony, Gioia's husband, takes a model called Sabrina back to his studio but finds that he cannot perform. Sabrina is later fatally stung when the murderer releases a swarm of bees in her apartment. Tony and his girlfriend are then killed in an accident at a department store. Roberto, a photographer, seems to be the obvious suspect... Despite a few flashes of inspired mayhem, this is a cynically-conceived attempt to add horror to a classic murder mystery plot in the hope that this might appeal to the kind of teenage audience who lapped up Lamberto Bava's *Demons*. The novelty of having the female victims made-up to appear as they might look from the killer's warped perspective is an intriguing one but the resulting imagery

merely looks silly, prompting complete puzzlement or open derision from the audience. Although the film includes some minor examples of stylish camerawork, Bava resorts to over-used red and blue filters to add atmosphere - but *gialli* work best when filmed in natural light, and the director had already proved that he could do better with the excellent *A Blade in the Dark* and *You'll Die At Midnight*. Nevertheless, the confrontation between Grandi, trembling in her white underwear, and the blood-puking killer is pleasingly sensationalised. Simon Boswell's main title theme is agreeable if you are in a charitable mood, but some of the Argento-influenced soft metal which accompanies the action is awful and now seems very dated.

Video:

Belgium: Video Go - 89m 44s, very slightly letterboxed, French language, washed out colour as *Delirium*.

France: Avoriaz/Gobbi (GCR) - as *Delirium*.

Germany: New Vision - 89m 40s, full screen as *Das Unheimliche Auge*.

Greece: NK Video/Medusa Video - 89m 40s, full screen, English language, Greek subtitles, dark transfer, good sound quality as *Delirium*.

Italy: AVO Film - as *Le foto di Gioia*.

Japan: label unknown - approx. 94m, letterboxed.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Dischi Ricordi LP.

DELITTI

('Crimes')

1986 Italy Augustus color 100m

Production Company: Il Mezzogiorno nuovo d'Italia

Director: Giovanna Lenzi

Story: based on Henry Becque's play 'La Parisienne'

Screenplay: Giovanna Lenzi

Cinematography: Domenico Paolero

Editor: Gianfranco Amicucci

Art Director: Valentino Grimaldi

Music: Guido and Maurizio De Angelis

Special Effects: Aldo Ciorsa, Sergio Basile

Cast: Saverio Vallone, Michela Miti, Tony Valente, Michel Clinford, Debora Ergas, Alessandra Izzo, Gianfranco Gallo, Sacha M. Darwin, Solvi Stubing, Louis Dek, Gianni Dei (*Harry*), Lara Orfei, Laura Troschel, Giorgio Ardisson, Jeanette Len [Giovanna Lenzi], Linda Christian, Simonetta Gallese, Vittorio Forte, Alessandro Croce, Giovanni Nardoni, Emi Valentini.

The police discover the murdered bodies of two people. Bizarrely, the victims' faces appear to have been turned inside out. At a disco, the black-gloved killer slips lethal sugar lumps into a witness's cup of coffee. Just as the police inspector on the case is about to interview her, she dies from poisoning. An array of female victims are massacred before it is revealed that there are two killers...

This incredibly cheap and inept production is probably the worst *giallo* discussed in this book. Despite a concerted attempt to understand what the hell was going on (with assistance from an Italian speaking friend) the brief synopsis above testifies to the film's incomprehensible storyline. Considering the frequent displays of unappealing wobbly female flesh on show in *Delitti*, it could easily be dismissed as a 'Reader's Wife' *giallo*, but more accurately it's a 'Director's Wife' *giallo*. Sergio Pastore, the director previously responsible for one of the better *gialli*, *The Crimes of the Black Cat*, 'supervised' this abomination for his wife Giovanna Lenzi, a former actress. However, Giovanna's gender does not prevent her from filling the screen with as many naked breasts and bottoms as possible. Actresses are even required to pop out their boobs while convulsing in death throes! With the exception of amateur porn, this is one of the ugliest films ever made, with gross actors, horrendous lighting and hideous sets. But the most unnerving

aspect of this bottom-of-the-barrel entry are the 'special effects' which occur in the aftermath of each killing. By the end of this *Plan 9 From Outer Space* it finally becomes clear that the hilarious multi-coloured plasticine make-up creations on show are supposed to represent the victims' heads turned inside out as a result of a highly adverse chemical reaction to viper venom. Other lowlights include a stunningly daft red herring scene which shows a woman phoning the police from a call box. A seemingly sinister figure approaches and removes his coat... then begins break dancing! On a final sad note, the score is filched from *A Blade in the Dark*.

DELITTI E PROFUMI

('Crimes and Perfume')

1988 Italy Kodak Telecolor 98m

Production Company: Reteitalia S.p.A./Numero Uno International S.r.l.

Director: Vittorio De Sisti

Producer: Claudio Bonivento

Story: Oreste De Fornari, Franco Ferrini based on 'Scarlet' by Carlo Alberto Bonadies, Oreste De Fornari

Screenplay: Franco Ferrini, Oreste De Fornari, Francesco Massaro

Cinematography: Beppe Maccari

Art Director: Egidio Spugnini

Editor: Claudio Di Mauro

Music: Umberto Smaila

Special Effects: Paolo and Roberto Ricci

Assistant Director: Roberto Tatti

Cast: Jerry Cala' (*Eddie*), Umberto Smailia (*Vice-Inspector Turrone*), Simonetta Gianfelici, Marina Viro, Nina Soldano, Silvia Annicchiarico, Eva Grimaldi (*blonde*), Lucrezia Lante Della Rovere (*Barbara*), Mara Venier, Gabriella Bonsignore, Antonio De Leo, Gianni Franco, Furlan Rate, Francesca Giordani, Renato Moretti, Novello Novelli, Giuseppe Terranova, Giuseppe Tremontozzi.

Eddie, a private detective employed by the owners of a shopping mall, investigates a series of murders in which the female victims are burnt alive when the flammable perfume they are wearing is exposed to heat. It transpires that the killer is seeking revenge on a group of girls who ridiculed a schoolgirl who was disfigured by chemicals in a seaside accident. Eddie uses a computer package designed to help women choose cosmetics to identify the culprit...

This spoof has an amusing opening scene in



which point-of-view shots allow the viewer to advance upon a group of unsuspecting female shoppers. However, instead of a killer the menace turns out to be a (typically Italian) serial bottom-pincher! The rest of the film never lives up to the promise of this simple visual gag, although the fiery murders are diverting enough for those who appreciate sick camp humour (in one scene, a bride in full wedding gown goes up in flames). One might have expected more from Argento collaborator Franco Ferrini, who co-wrote this comedy, until you remember he was responsible for the 'social realist' giallo **Caramelle di uno sconosciuto**. Both films share the same composer, Umberto Smaila, who turns in an awful racket here which sounds like watered-down *Guns 'n' Roses*. Eva Grimaldi has a cameo appearance as a Marilyn Monroe blonde who ignites while cavorting in front of her date's car headlights, and even Traci Lords makes a very brief appearance in a (soft) porno video clip. Director De Sisti's previous involvement with the genre was second unit director for **Who Saw Her Die?**

Video:

Italy: Penta Video - 95m 15s, full screen as **Delitti e profumi**.

IL DELITTO DI VIA MONTI PARIOLI

('The Crime on Via Monti Parioli')

Detective per caso (shooting title 'Detective by Chance')

1997 Italy Kodak 96m

Production Company:

Director: Antonio Bonifacio

Story: Antonio Bonifacio, Daniele Stroppa

Screenplay: Daniele Stroppa

Cinematography: Silvano Tessicini

Editor: Adriano Tagliavia

Art Director and Costumes: Alessandro Bentivegna

Music: Agricantus

Assistant Director: Cesare Squitti

Cast: Luca Lionello (*Mirko*), Veronika Logan (*Gia*), Katarina Vassilissa (*Vera Grimaldi*),

Salvatore Marino (*Carlo*), Giovanni Visentin (*Piero Adamoli*), Antonello Murru (*Raul*),

Francesca Bonifacio (*Jessica*), Mia Benedetta (*Sara*), Gianni Pellegrino (*Inspector Mazza*),

Ivano De Matteo (*Assistant Inspector Angeli*),

Raffaele Vannoli (*policeman*), Luigia

Aristodemo (*bar cashier*), Sonia Topazio

(*Gianna*), Rossella Monaco (*Nicoletta Girardi*).

A man and a woman are making passionate love on a bed. The man is suddenly asphyxiated by an assailant with a leather belt and the woman is seemingly compliant with this act of violence.

In order to make ends meet, Mirko, a university student, has set himself up as a private investigator. Berto Grimaldi, a suspicious husband, hires Mirko to keep an eye on his stunning wife Vera. When her car breaks down the private eye cannot resist giving her a lift and they soon end up in bed together. However, when Mrs Grimaldi turns up at his office for more sex someone photographs their encounter. The private eye is lured to the Grimaldi's house but finds a dead man in the swimming pool and the police at the garden gate. Naturally, he is their main suspect and is forced to escape in order to reveal the truth...

This quirky thriller incorporates references to Film Noir with the hip aspects of today's Italian culture (Via Monti Parioli is a trendy street full of fashionable residences while the film's rock soundtrack incorporates break beats and world music). This is a Nineties film, no mistake, and those who cannot allow themselves to look beyond the golden age of *gialli* will doubtless be disappointed. Once the viewer is drawn in by the surprising depth of characterisation and the mystery surrounding the opening murder, minor irritations such as the unlikely private eye's habit of playing with a musical yoyo and his adoption of female guise to avoid the police can be overlooked. Individual details which give

the film its own character, such as the male lead taking advice from his daughter, his friendly association with his ex-wife's new partner, and his distinctive graffiti-covered, multi-coloured office are further reasons to give it a look. Oh, and Katarina Vassilissa, so memorable in Tinto Brass' **The Voyeur**, pouts convincingly as the irresistible femme fatale.

Video:

Italy: BMG Video - 93m slight black bars as **Il delitto di Via Monti Parioli**.

DELITTO CARNALE

('Carnal Crime')

1982 Italy Telecolor scope 91m

Production Company: A.F.C. Cinematografica

Director: Cesare Canevari

Producer: Antonio Bertucci

Story: Aldo Crudo

Screenplay: Cesare Canevari, Fulvio Ricciardi

Editor: Francesco Bertolucci

Art Director and Costumes: Loredana Palmini

Music: Mimi Uva

Assistant Director: Enrico Turolla

Cast: Marc Porel, Sonia Otero, Fulvio Ricciardi,

Moana Pozzi, Dirce Funari, Desy and Silvana, Rino Falcone, Angela Minafro, Pippo Volpe, Barbara Magnolfi, Nico Salatino, Vanni Materassi, Tony Raccosta.

The owner of a secluded country hotel on the Adriatic coast dies in mysterious circumstances. Everyone gets very drunk at a party and various sexual encounters ensue. But there's a black-gloved killer on the prowl and the night before the funeral, two women are killed...

Director Cesare Canevari's entry into the field of Nazisploitation, **The Gestapo's Last Orgy**, was more stylish than the other camp offerings, however **Delitto carnale** is a weak, sexed-up addition to the *giallo* genre. The kitschy setting, garish colours, close-ups of eyes and lips, wild zooms and odd camera angles recall Bava's **Five Dolls for an August Moon**, though the cheap production values are more akin to one of Jesus Franco's efforts. The murders are so poorly presented you may be left wondering whether Canevari had been hitting the bottle as much as the on-screen characters do for most of the movie. Future hardcore queen Moana Pozzi is featured in a vapid lesbian session,

THE DEVIL WITH MASKED FACES



CAROL BAKER - GEORGE HILTON

**FLETCHER
VIDEO**

Colour
Running Time
93 mins.
THRILLER
Category 'X'

which later prompted some unscrupulous shysters to edit together a 'hardcore version' of *Delitto carnale* to cash-in on the blonde Moschella's popularity.

Video:

Kineo - 83m 26s: soft version, label
Kineo - 83m 57s, heavily re-edited 'hardcore' version. Both as *Delitto carnale*.

THE DEVIL WITH SEVEN FACES

Il diavolo a sette facce

Le diable a sept visages (France)

The Devil with Seven Faces (Bloody Mary)

Nights of Terror (UK: video re-title)

Italy Eastmancolor colore LV (Luciano Pigozzi) 89m

Production Company: Cine Escalation

Director: Osvaldo Civirani

Screenplay: Tito Carpi, Osvaldo Civirani

Cinematography: Walter Civirani

Editor: Mauro Contini

Art Director: Giorgio Postiglione

Music: Stelvio Cipriani

Cast: George Hilton (*Tony Shane*), Carroll Baker

(*Harrison and Mary Harrison, her twin*),

Lucretia Love (*Margareth*), Luciano Pigozzi

(*Steve Hunter, an ex-insurance investigator*),

Enrico Vargis (*James Marlowe*), Franco Ressel

(*Inspector Rinker*), Carla Mancini, Gianni

Giorgio, Roberto Messina, Maria Ricotti, Ivano

Roberto (*Hank, a kidnapper*), Stephen Boyd

(*Dave Barton*).

Amsterdam: Julie Harrison, a translator, is stalked by a mysterious man. She subsequently informs Dave Barton, her lawyer, that her identical twin, Mary, has contacted her from London because her life is being threatened. Dave's friend Tony, a racing driver, saves Julie from being kidnapped and the pair are later menaced by two thugs. In the shoot-out which ensues a motorcyclist is killed, so Tony arranges for Julie to hide-out in an apartment owned by an old lady. That night, she is terrified by strange noises from the attic and discovers the woman's corpse. Tony re-appears and she flees. An insurance investigator informs Barton that Julie's sister apparently stole a million pounds and diamond from a Maharaja. Mary's husband Craig was an accomplice but she double-crossed him and made off with the gem for herself. Meanwhile, an old associate of Tony's, who is coincidentally a New York diamond dealer, turns up...

This crime thriller has *giallo* twists woven throughout its sinuous plot. Baker once again plays a seemingly innocent woman terrorised by outright villains or ambiguous individuals who turn out to be rogues (see *Paranoia*; *A Quiet Place To Kill*; *The Fourth Victim*).

Stephen Boyd, the star of epics like *Ben Hur*, is a lawyer whose motives are constantly being questioned by the police (and the viewer). Boyd's career was on the slide in the early Seventies (he was also in minor psycho pics *Nel buio del terrore* and *Marta*) but this is one of his better roles. The film includes some pretty stupid moments, such as Baker being menaced by a man in a gorilla mask brandishing a large knife (a practical joke played by a work colleague - very likely!). And although the climax in and around a desolate windmill (calling *Mill of the Stone Women*) is reasonably effective, the Amsterdam locations could have been put to better use. Similarly, a fleeting visit to London is over before you realise it and leaves the viewer wondering why they bothered. Elsewhere, a car chase is reduced to a farce by the use of speeded up film. Nevertheless, the scenes where Baker discovers an old woman's body in the attic or is half-drowning in the bath provide the requisite thrills. Long-serving director Civirani turned his hand to any genre from sexy mondo to peplums, westerns and motor racing pics. In *giallo* terms, *The Devil with Seven Faces* is a run-of-the-(wind)mill affair, but the ambiguous leads played by Baker, Boyd and Hilton, combined with the presence of genre regulars



such as Pigozzi and Ressel provide reason alone to give this Devil a spin.

Video:

France: Universal Video, Socai Video - as *Le diable a sept visages*.

Holland: Fletcher - as *The Devil with Seven Faces*.

UK: Fletcher - 87m 15s, letterboxed as *The Devil with Seven Faces*; Movie Magic - 87m 15s, letterboxed with superimposed on screen title *Nights of Terror*.

DON'T LOOK NOW

A Venezia... un Dicembre rosso shocking ('In Venice... a Shocking Red December')

Rødt Chok (Denmark: 'Red Shock')

Ne vous retournez pas (France 'No Return For You')

Wenn die Gondeln Trauer Tragen (Germany 'When the Funeral Gondolier Comes')

Ne Nezz Vissza! (Hungary)

Aquele inverno em Veneza (Portugal)

1973 UK/Italy Technicolor 110m

Production Company: Casey Productions (London)/Eldorado Film (Rome)

Director: Nicolas Roeg

Producer: Peter Katz

Story: based on a story by Daphne du Maurier

Screenplay: Allan Scott, Chris Bryant

Cinematography: Anthony Richmond

Editor: Graeme Clifford

Art Director: Giovanni Soccol

Music: Pino Donnagio

Music Director: Giampiero Boneschi

Cast: Julie Christie (*Laura Baxter*), Donald

Sutherland (*John Baxter*), Hilary Mason

(*Heather*), Celia Matania (*Wendy*), Massimo

Serato (*Bishop Barbarrigo*), Renato Scarpa

(*Inspector Longhi*), Giorgio Trestini (*workman*),

Leopoldo Trieste (*hotel manager*), David Tree

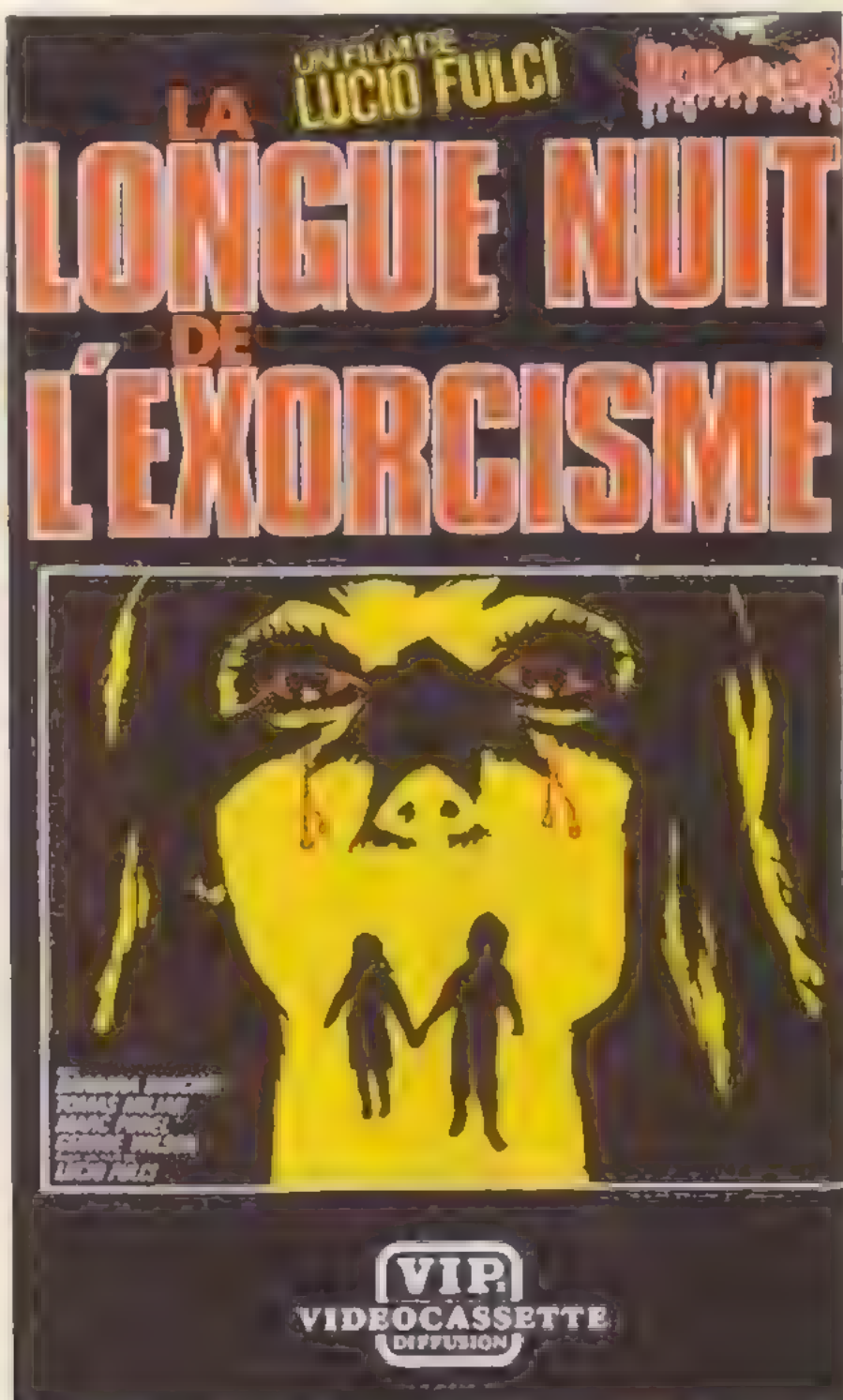
(*Anthony Babbage*), Ann Rye (*Mandy Babbage*),

Nicholas Salter (*Johnny Baxter*), Sharon

Williams (*Christine Baxter*), Bruno Cattaneo

(*Detective Sabbione*), Adelina Poerio (*dwarf*).

Having been traumatised by the accidental death of their little daughter, for which they feel responsible, John and Laura Baxter travel to Venice off season in December. An expert in



restoration, John has been contracted to carry out work on an ancient church and it seems that the change of locale is helping them to cope with their tragedy. However, the couple are disconcerted when a blind medium claims to have a message from their deceased child. Meanwhile, a killer is stalking the streets and alleyways of Venice, and the Baxters become drawn into a terrifying series of inexplicable events which can only lead to tragedy... Former cinematographer Roeg makes superb use of the beautiful Venetian architecture to create a genuinely individual and macabre example of cinema at its finest. His dazzling use of swift editing is not only impressive to the eye, but each fragment of visual information (water, shattering glass, red motifs, darkness) adds to

the composition and creates a really foreboding atmosphere. There are outstanding performances from the entire cast and the obvious chemistry between Christie and Sutherland makes the proceedings more involving. Their passionate sexual encounter, which made the film a cause célèbre at the time of its release, signifies a physical and mental release because it's the first time the couple have been able to make love since the tragic death of their daughter. The revelatory scenes in which Sutherland's character is stalked through alleyways and canals by a mysterious red dwarf are genuinely chilling.

Video:

France: EMI Video.
Holland: EMI Video.
Hungary: Mokep.
Italy: Skorpion Home Video - as **A Venezia... un Dicembre rosso shocking.**
Portugal: Lusomundo - with sleeve title **Aquele inverno em Veneza.**
UK: EMI - 105m 22s, full screen as **Don't Look Now**; Warner Home Video - full screen as **Don't Look Now.**
USA: Paramount - as **Don't Look Now.**

Laserdisc:

USA: Paramount - uncut, full screen as **Don't Look Now.**

DON'T TORTURE A DUCKLING

Non si sevezia un Paperino ('Don't Torture Donald Duck' - In Italy, Donald Duck is called Paperino)

Fanatismo (Italy: alternate title 'Fanaticism')
Woodoo (Denmark: 'Voodoo')

La longue nuit de l'exorcisme (France: 'The Long Night of Exorcism')

Fureur meurtrière (France: video re-title 'Murderous Fury')

Angustia de silencio (Spain: 'Silent Anguish')
1972 Italy Technicolor Techniscope 110m
Production Company: Medusa Films (Rome)
Director: Lucio Fulci
Producer: Renato Laboni

Story: Lucio Fulci, Roberto Gianviti
Screenplay: Lucio Fulci, Roberto Gianviti, Gianfranco Clerici
Cinematography: Sergio D'Offizi
Editor: Ornella Micheli
Art Director: Pierluigi Basile
Music: Riz Ortolani
Assistant Director: Francesco Cinieri
Cast: Florinda Bolkan (*Martara*), Barbara Bouchet (*Patricia*), Tomas Milian (*Andrea Martelli, a journalist*), Irene Papas (*Dona Aurelia Avallone, Don Alberto's mother*), Marc Porel (*Don Alberto Avallone, a priest*), George Wilson (*Old Francesco*), Vito Passeri (*Giuseppe*), Antonello Campodifiori (*lieutenant in Carabinieri*), Ugo D'Alessio (*Captain Modesti*), Virginio Gazzolo (*public prosecutor*), Rosalia Maggio, Linda Sini (*Senora Lo Cascio, Bruno's mother*), Andrea Aureli (*Senor Lo Cascio, Bruno's father*), Franco Balducci (*Senor Spriano, Michele's father*).
Uncredited Cast: Duilio Cruciani (*Mario*), Janos Bartha (*police lieutenant*).

In a small mountainside town in Southern Italy, someone is murdering boys in their early teens. Martara, a woman who claims to be a witch, is seen suspiciously unearthing the skeleton of a baby and sticking pins into wax effigies. However, the authorities initially arrest Giuseppe, who is 'mentally deficient', because he made a feeble attempt to profit from the disappearance of one of the boys and walked right into their trap. Andrea Martelli, a quick-witted newshound from Milan, arrives to cover the murders and immediately begins to question the authorities' assumptions. He meets two potential suspects: Don Alberto, the local priest with a high-minded moral attitude, and Patricia, a sexually-provocative young woman with a drug problem. In the face of incompetence by the local police and the Carabinieri, Martelli begins to investigate the crimes himself... As well as its unusual and rather misleading title, **Don't Torture a Duckling** offers a very individual variation on generic stereotypes. The fact that the killer's victims are all pubescent lads marks this film out as an attempt at a serious murder mystery. Milian's enquiries reveal a twisted individual whose sense of reality has





been warped by over-zealous musings about the boys' loss of innocence. Nevertheless, it does obey certain conventions such as trying to bewilder the viewer with (obvious) red herrings. The film's relative obscurity is probably due to the lack of screaming, semi-naked female victims more than anything else (it's amazing how quickly Fulci's career had deteriorated by the time that 'slashing up women was a pleasure' in *The New York Ripper!*). It's a shame that attention is repeatedly focused on the director's more accessible works, such as *The Beyond*, because *Duckling* is one of his most accomplished achievements. The film looks stunning, thanks to Sergio D'Offizi's outstanding photography (a murder in woodlands during a thunderstorm literally sparkles), camerawork which places the viewer right in the action (especially during the interrogation of suspects) and the rural locations (the concrete highway which snakes its way across the barren landscape is a lasting image). The director's obvious penchant for overt sadism is evidenced by a particularly cruel chain-whipping sequence and graphic shots of the killer's head smashing against the side of a cliff but unlike the gore-for-gore's-sake in efforts like *Nightmare Concert*, these alarming sights are placed within a contextual framework, rendering them even more effective. A solid cast - Bolkan, Buchet and Milian are uniformly excellent in 'real' roles which require them to act - marking the film out from inferior exercises. Debate about the film's political stance - basically whether it attempts to condemn or understand the 'ignorance' of its rustic community - has detracted from its powerful imagery and surprising entertainment value. Seek this one out.

Video:

Belgium: Cine Plus - as *Fureur meurtriere*.
 Denmark: Filmlab - 96m 23s, letterboxed as *Hoodoo*.
 France: VIP; Fil a Film 'Au-Dela du Reel' Collection. Both as *La longue nuit de l'exorcisme*.
 Greece: Video Alsen - as *Don't Torture a Duckling*.
 Holland: Sunrise - 98m 50s, letterboxed at 1.77:1, Dutch subtitles; VDN - 98m 43s, letterboxed at 1.77:1. Both releases as *Don't Torture a Duckling*.
 Japan: Daiei Video - letterboxed, English language, Japanese subtitles as *Don't Torture a Duckling*.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Point Records CD on a double-bill with *Le amazzoni*.

THE DOUBLE

La controfigura

Love Inferno (Germany)

1971 Italy Eastmancolor Technochrome 94m
 Production Company: Claudia Cinematografica S.r.l. (Rome)

Director: Romolo Guerrieri (Romolo Girolami)

Producer: Gino Mordini

Story: Sauro Scavolini based on the novel 'La

controfigura' by Libero Bigiaretti

Screenplay: Alessandro Continenza, Sauro Scavolini

Editor: Carlo Reali

Cinematography: Carlo Carlini

Art Director: Antonio Visone

Music: Armando Trovajoli

Assistant Director: Monica Felt

Cast: Eva [Ewa] Aulin (*Lucia*), Jean Sorel (*Frank*), Lucia Bosé (*Nora Tosatti*), Silvano Tranquilli (*Roger*), Marilu Tolo, Sergio Doria (*Eddie Kenham*), Antonio Pierfederici (*Professor Bergham*), Bruno Boschetti, Giacomo Rossi-Stuart (*Frank's brother*), Pupo [Giovanni] De Luca (*police inspector*).

A young man is shot by an older man in an underground car park. His recent experiences flash before him as he desperately tries to understand why he came to be lying in a pool of his own blood. He is Frank, a self-confessed loafer who dabbles in architecture but is content to live off his father's allowance. While holidaying in Morocco with Lucia, a flirtatious nineteen year-old, her attractive mother, Nora, comes to visit. Frank immediately switches from being jealous over his girlfriend's interest in Eddie, a young American traveller, to a fixation on her mother. Compelled to act, he forces himself upon her and they have passionate sex. Once the heat of the moment has worn off, Frank is wracked with guilt and Nora angrily dismisses him. Unfortunately, the dreaming architect is still obsessed and follows her back to Rome. As his fevered imagination gets the better of him, Frank becomes convinced that Nora and Eddie, the young American, are seeing each other. Eddie contacts him from Nora's apartment and Frank races over, only to find the young man dead. Believing that Nora has killed him, and in order to protect her, Frank removes all traces of the murder and disposes of the body. Unfortunately, it soon transpires that Nora is *not even in Rome!* So who killed Eddie and why...?

Every once in a while an unheralded film arrives and restores faith in the kind of genre cinema readers of this book admire; *The Double* is such a film. Even as the opening

credits unspool to the dulcet sound of Nora Orlandi's sweet vocals over another of Trovajoli's excellent easy listening vibes, it's obvious that the film is going to be a delight. Girolami's camera, positioned on the front of Sorel's Citroen, records the protagonist's fateful journey towards his executioner while the streets of Rome slip by - just as Sorel's recent life is about to slip by. Although initially fragmented, the film's narrative gradually pieces together the obsessional actions which caused Frank, the ineffectual male protagonist (another one!), to become involved in sexual indiscretions and murder and bring upon himself the wrath of an equally obsessive lover. Unfortunately, it would require an essay to outline why this film intrigues and then captives the viewer. Having previously contributed the serviceable but far from scintillating *The Sweet Body of Deborah*, Girolami obviously realised he had some superior material to work with because he pulls out all the stops visually and coaxes some great performances from Aulin, Bosé and Sorel (usually just a handsome face who plays leads with no real depth). The sexual tensions between various individuals in the 'holiday' scenes - Silvano Tranquilli, Marilu Tolo and Sergio Doria also deserve a mention - are excellently observed and portrayed. In the prevailing onslaught of deranged maniacs and greedy inheritance seekers, *The Double* is also a wonderful reminder of the extent to which good old desire provides a motive for murder in many *gialli*.

Video:

Germany: label unknown - as *Love Inferno*.
 Greece: VCI - 74m 14s, full screen, grainy print as *The Double*.

THE EMBALMER

Il mostro di Venezia ('The Monster of Venice')

Le monstre de Venise (France)

1964 Italy black and white 85m
 Production Company: Gondola Film
 Director: Dino Tavella

Producer: Antonio Walter

Story: Dino Tavella based on an idea by Antonio Walter

Screenplay: Antonio Walter, Giovan Battista

Musetto, Paolo Lombardo, Dino Tavella

Cinematographer: Mario Parapetti

Editor: Giovan Battista Museto

Art Director: Giuseppe Ranieri, Francesco Stancopiano

Music: Marcello Gigante

Music Director: Alessandro Nadin

Assistant Director: Elio Tomadina

Cast: Maureen Lidgard Brown, Gin Mart [Gino Marturano], Alcide Gazzotto, Alba Brotto, Elmo Caruso, Vicky Del Castillo, Carlo Russo, Paola Vaccari, Maria Rosa Vizzina, Gaetano Dell'Era, Pietro Walter, Roberto Contero, Francesco Bagarin, Jack Judd, Antonio Grossi, Luciano Gasper, Anita Todesco.

A dark night in Venice: a frogman climbs out of a canal, overpowers a young woman and drags her into the watery depths. In a submerged monastery the frogman embalms her body. He continues to kidnap and embalm young women in order to preserve their beauty. The police seem powerless but a young journalist, assigned to cover the visit of a party of college girls to the city, begins his own investigation when one of the young women is abducted. In the meantime, he falls in love with one of the young women, unaware that she has been selected as the killer's next victim. She discovers a secret passage which leads down from her hotel manager's office and interrupts a hooded figure bending over the body of her missing friend...

Despite a few creepy encounters in *The Embalmer's* lair and a fluid finale this Edgar Wallace inspired horror-*giallo* is a fairly run-of-the-submerged-monastery affair. The necrophiliac theme was perhaps still shocking to audiences at the time but the subtle way in which this nefarious activity is implied will leave mod-



ern thrill-seekers cold. The film-makers obviously received a great deal of assistance from the Venice tourist department because the movie is jam-packed with sly plugs for a gorgeous city which surely needs no promotion.

Video:

USA: Sinister Cinema - 77m 14s, letterboxed as **The Embalmer**.

THE ETRUSCAN KILLS AGAIN

L'etrusco uccide ancora

Ubica Dolazi Iz Groba (Yugoslavia)

Das Geheimnis des Gelben Grabes

(Germany 'The Mystery of the Gold Diggers')

Overtime (France, Belgium and Holland: video sleeve title)

Gravkammerets Gate (Norway)

El dios de la muerte asesina otra vez (Spain 'The God of the Dead Killer From Another Time')

The Dead Are Alive (USA)

1972 Italy/Yugoslavia/West Germany

Technicolor 105m

Production Company: Modial Te. Fi (Rome)/Inex

Films (Belgrade)/C.C.C. Filmkunst G.M.B.H. (Berlin)

Director: Armando Crispino

Story and Screenplay: Lucio Battistrada,

Armando Crispino

Cinematographer: Erico Menczer

Editor: Alberto Galliti

Art Director: Giantito Burchiellaro

Music and Music Director: Riz Ortolani

Special Effects: Armando Grilli

Cast: Alex Cord (*Professor Jason Porter*),

'The Etruscan Kills Again'

Samantha Eggar (*Myra Shelton*), John Marley (*Nikos Samarakis*), Nadja Tiller (*Leni Samarakis*), Horst Frank (*Stephan/Stephen*), Enzo Tarascio (*Inspector Giuranna*), Enzo Cerusico (*Alberto*), Carlo De Mejo (*Igor*), Vladan Milasinovic, Daniela Surina (*Irene*), Christiane Von Blank (*Velia*), Mario Maranzana (*Vitanza*), Pier Luigi D'Orazio (*Minelli*), Wendy D'Olive (*Giselle*), Ivan Pavicevac (*policeman*), Cinzia Bruno, Rodolfo Bigotti, Rosa Torosh, Pietro Fumelli, Carla Mancini.

Two lovers are clubbed to death by an unseen figure. The positioning of the corpses in an Etruscan burial ground suggests that the crime is a macabre offering to the demon-god Tuchulcha, whose tomb archaeologist Jason Porter has recently desecrated with a camera probe. Jason's ex-wife, Myra - now involved with Nikos Samarakis, a tyrannical orchestra conductor - is reluctant to renew her relationship with him due to an alcohol-fuelled stabbing incident (which Jason cannot recall). The murders continue and a number of suspects emerge: Nikos' smouldering masochistic assistant; Leni, his clandestine fire-scarred wife; Stephan, a sneering "faggot choreographer", and a sadistic, acquisitive site guard called Igor (!) who sets fire to insects. Realising that he is in "a tricky situation", Jason attempts to reveal the killer's identity...

"Doesn't the idea of an Etruscan burial ground turn you on?" queries Alex Cord's anti-hero, in one of the film's fittingly ridiculous lines. Etruscan cemeteries may not be everyone's sexual kick but they do offer an intriguing setting for this *giallo* with fake supernatural overtones. For despite its horror-themed titles, suggestions of reincarnation and early scenes which imply that Etruscans have returned to life, it soon becomes clear that the culprit is a modern-day maniac rather than a crusty old zombie. Unjustly dismissed in some quarters, Crispino's absurd mystery is populated by an array of overexcited obsessives and misfits (even the ineffectual detective figure is a self-doubting alcoholic) and has a welcome air of hysteria which distinguishes it from other more sedate thrillers of the period. Despite the film's patently unconvincing narrative it succeeds in engaging its audience because it breezes along blithely piling one preposterous act upon another. The manic approach, which includes a knockabout car chase through the cobbled streets of picturesque Spoleto, and a climactic confrontation in an amphitheatre (amidst deafening renditions of Verdi's *Requiem*), is slightly wearing but undoubtedly effective. A later production, **The Scorpion with Two Tails**, was obviously influenced by Crispino's film but proved to be a banal televisual re-run.

Video:

Denmark: Video International - 101m 38s, full

screen as **The Etruscan Kills Again**.

France and Belgium: Proserpine Video.

France: VIP - 97m 16s, letterboxed, jumpy print.

Italian credits and the superimposed title

Overtime.

Germany: Toppic 'Krimi' series - 93m 18s, let-

terboxed at 1.85:1 as **Das Geheimnis des**

Gelben Grabes. A brief scene in which Jason

(Cord) pets a stray cat in a dark ampitheatre is

missing but the pre-credits sequence is longer

than the American Luminous version.

Greece: label unknown - full screen.

Norway: CP Entertainment/Rohde and Saether

Video Division - 100m 01s: violence heavily cut,

full screen as **The Etruscan Kills Again** with

sleeve title **Gravkammerets Gate**.

USA: Luminous Film and Video Wurks (sic) -

101m 53s, widescreen at 2.35:1 as **The Dead**

Are Alive. Although the print is slightly dam-

aged and has several jumpy sections, the film

can at least be appreciated in its correct aspect

ratio.

EVIL EYE

La ragazza che sapeva troppo ('The Girl Who Knew Too Much')

The Evil Eye (English version publicity title)

La fille qui en savait trop (France 'The Girl Who Knew Too Much')

L'incubo (working title: 'Nightmare')

1962 Italy black and white 88m

Production Company: Galatea Film S.p.a. (Milan)/Coronet Produzioni S.r.l. (Milan/Rome)

Director: Mario Bava

Producer: Ferruccio De Martino

Story and Screenplay: Ennio De Concini, Sergio Corbucci, Eliana De Sabata

Screenplay Collaborators: Mino Guerrini, Franco Prosperi, Mario Bava

Cinematography: Mario Bava

Art Director: Giorgio Giovannini

Editor: Mario Serandrei

Music: Roberto Nicolosi

Assistant Director: Franco Prosperi

Cast: John Saxon (*Doctor Marcello Bassi*), Leticia [Letitia] Roman (*Nora Dralston*), Valentina Cortese (*Laura Torrani*), Dante Di Paolo (*Andrea Landini*), Robert Buchanan (*Inspector Alessi*), Gianni Di Benedetto (*Professor Torrani/Craven*), Jim Dolen (*priest*), Lucia Modugno (*nurse*), Virginia Doro (*conciierge*), Luigi Bonos (*hotel porter*), Chana Coubert (*Ethel*), Adriana Marchetti (*waitress in trattoria*), Milo Quesada, Franco Morici, Gustavo De Nardo, Peggy Nathan, Marta Melecco, John Stacy, Titti Tomaino, Tiberio Murgia, Dafydd Haward, Lido

American secretary Nora Dralston arrives in Rome to stay with her aged aunt. Doctor Marcello Bassi informs Nora that the old lady is seriously ill, and that night, she dies in her bed. Nora goes to the nearby hospital to inform the handsome doctor, and in front of the Spanish steps, she witnesses a woman stabbed to death with a knife. She passes out and when she awakes sees a man extracting the knife from the woman's back. But when the police and Doctor Bassi investigate, there is no body. The increasingly distressed young woman is offered a place to stay by Laura Torrani, who is going to visit her husband in Switzerland. The maid informs Nora about three unsolved crimes, dubbed the Alphabet Murders, the last of which occurred ten years before in the same house! She realises that previous victims had surnames beginning with A, B and C and, because her name starts with D, she could be the next victim...

Although there had already been a number of murder mysteries, Bava's **Evil Eye** is generally regarded as the first thriller which defines the term *giallo*, as it uses plot elements from the popular crime novels with yellow covers and combines these with touches of horror (did the German 'krimis'). The crime connection is obvious: wide-eyed Leticia Roman's character Nora is seen reading a detective novel called 'The Knife' within the film's opening moments and is revealed to be a fan of murder stories (there are also references to Dashiell Spillane and Agatha Christie). However, certain scenes, like Nora's discovery of her dead aunt during a thunderstorm, shots of her running through the streets of Rome screaming "aiuto, aiuto!" (help, help), and the final revelation of the killer's identity could have come straight from a horror movie. Another scene depicts Nora being terrorised by a man's booming voice in a stark, empty apartment lit by flickering lightbulbs. The voice turns out to be from a tape recording, an unconvincing explanation, but entirely in keeping with the incredible events, almost supernatural killers, and unlikely solutions which would come to categorise the *giallo* genre. That other whodunnit stand-by, the red herring, is also present and in preparation of future entries, even John Saxon's hero is fleetingly presented as a menacing figure. Dante Di Paolo (also in **Blood and Black Lace**) delivers an entertaining performance as a writer who has been obsessed by the Alphabet Murders for over ten years. The black and white cinematography and lighting are splendidly realised, contributing to **Evil**



Eye's somewhat melodramatic but undeniably effective ambience. Interestingly, the English language version is an alternate edit which is more playful, even comic, and has sequences not in the Italian print. Not unsurprisingly, the latter contains a few extra shots which emphasize the violent attributes of the story. The endings are also completely different. As would become their practice throughout the Sixties, US distributors AIP replaced Roberto Nicolosi's score with one by Les Baxter.

Video:

France: VIP - 81m 44s, full screen, good quality print as **La fille qui en savait trop**.
Italy: Fonit Cetra - 82m 07s, full screen as **La ragazza che sapeva troppo**.
USA: Creature Features - 91m 31s, full screen with minor print damage as **Evil Eye**.

EVIL SENSES

Sensi ('Senses')

Stripped to Die (Germany)

1986 Italy colour

Production Company: Globe Films S.r.l./Dania Film S.r.l./Filmes International S.r.l./National Cinematografica S.r.l.

Director: Gabriele Lavia

Producer: Pietro Innocenzi

Story: Gabriele Lavia

Screenplay: Gianfranco Clerici, Gabriele Lavia, Vincenzo Mannino, Dardano Sacchetti

Cinematography: Mario Vulpiani

Editor: Daniele Alabiso

Art Director: Giovanni Agostinucci

Music: Fabio Frizzi

Assistant Director: Domenico Lo Zito

Cast: Monica Guerritore (*Victoria*), Gabriele Lavia (*Manuel Zani*), Lewis Eduard Ciannelli, Dario Mazzoli, Gioia Maria Scola, Jean Rene Masrevery (*Maurice*), Ragnhild Aslaksen, Mimsy Farmer (*Nicole*).

Manuel, a disaffected professional hit man, has some documents which incriminate several important individuals known collectively as 'The Organisation'. Several hit men are assigned to kill him so he takes refuge at an exclusive brothel run by Nicole, his ex-lover but seems resigned to his fate. Previously a loner, he becomes embroiled in an obsessive relationship with a mysterious part-time prostitute called Victoria. However, she is not all she seems...

Unfortunately, like the life of its male protagonist, **Evil Senses** is an empty experience with few redeeming points. It's painfully slow and full of characters who indulge in conversations filled with 'meaningful' pauses. Granted, it begins promisingly with contract killer Manuel

coolly blowing away a rival killer posing as a London cabbie but once the story, re-titled in Rome, this morbid 'erotic' drama almost grinds to a standstill. The sexual encounters are lurid and even potentially perverse details such as Victoria provocatively discarding her panties for her transfixed lover, are rendered unexciting due to the static presentation. To make matters worse, the full screen version under review includes too many ugly close-ups and is missing a few seconds of much-needed violence (a death by electric drill), making it even more of a chore to watch. Actor/director Lavia (previously a central figure in **Deep Red**) also fixated on his wife Guerritore in his **Scandalous Gilda**, another tedious film to be avoided. Sergio Martino's sex thriller involving professional killers, **Foxy Lady**, is an altogether less pretentious affair and all the more enjoyable for it.

Video:

Germany: VPS Video - letterboxed as **Stripped to Die**.
UK: Avatar - cut, full screen as **Evil Senses**.
Angel Films/Arthouse - as **Evil Senses**.

EYEBALL

Gatti rossi in un labirinto di vetro ('Red Cats in a Labyrinth of Glass')

L'occhio sbarrato nel buio ('Wide-Eyed in the Dark')

The Secret Killer (English language title)

Wide Eyed in the Dark (video re-title)

El ojo en la oscuridad (Spain 'The Eye in the Darkness')

The Devil's Eye (USA: alternate title)

1974 Italy/Spain Technospes Cinescope 91m

Production Company: Pioneer National Cinematografica (Rome)/Estela Film (Madrid)

Director: Umberto Lenzi

Executive Producer: José Maria Cunilles

Story: Felix Tusell

Screenplay: Felix Tusell, Umberto Lenzi

Cinematography: Antonio Millan

Editor: Amedeo Moriani

Art Director: José Massague

Music and Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: Angel G. Gauna

Cast: Martine Brochard (*Paulette Stone*), John Richardson (*Mark Burton*), Ines Pellegrini (*Naiba Campbell*), Andres Mejuto (*Inspector Tudela*), Mirta Miller (*Lisa Sanders*), Daniele Vargas (*Robby Alvarado*), George [Jorge] Rigaud (*Reverend Bronson*), Silvia Solar (*Katia Alvarado*), Raf Baldassarre (*coach driver*), José Maria Blanco, John Bartha [Janos Bartha], Olga

Dutch video sleeve of 'Eyeball'





Italian video sleeve for 'Fashion Crimes'

Pehar, Veronica Miriel, Olga Montes, Richard Kolin, Rina Mascetti, Vittorio Fanfoni, Tom Felleghy [Tomasso Felleghi] (*pathologist*), Fulvio Mingozzi, Francesco Narducci, Lorenzo Piani, Marta May (*Alma Foster*).

A coach party of American tourists are on holiday in Barcelona when one of their number, a young woman, is stabbed to death by a red-gloved assailant. In a gruesome touch, the killer removes the victim's left eye. Next day, the tourist party visit an amusement park. While on a ghost train ride Peggy, a teenager, is also slain. Businessman Mark Burton discovers that his wife Alma is apparently in Barcelona and recalls an incident which occurred back in the States - when he found her lying unconscious with a knife and a human eyeball beside her. Meanwhile, members of the tourist party come under increasing suspicion when a local peasant girl is killed. Lisa, a lesbian, is the next victim when her stomach and throat are slashed open. Naiba, the lesbian victim's lover, is then attacked by a figure in a red raincoat. Later that evening, Jenny is attacked by the killer as she takes a midnight swim. Mark is discovered nearby with the murder weapon... The inherent ridiculousness of this gleeful exercise in exploitation becomes apparent when reading (or worse still, attempting to explain!) the plot. The notion that the beleaguered holiday-makers would continue with their jolly jaunt around Barcelona, and even take an (ironic) day trip to Sitges, is laughable in itself, but considering such ridiculous ideas as a sanatorium packed with an arsenal of medieval weapons (in *Slaughter Hotel*), it's not uncommonly daft in genre terms. However, when offering red herrings or explaining away the murderer's mindless motive, *Eyeball* has to reign supreme as one of the most stupid *gialli* in the whole genre. All this lunacy is laced with an unforgettable throwaway theme by Bruno Nicolai which is repeated so often you wonder whether Lenzi is attempting to torture his audience with music. But (inexplicably) the film does have a curious appeal which, like the undersized coach the sightseers board every few minutes, carries the viewer on through the mayhem. It all comes down to what constitutes good trash and bad trash. *Eyeball* is so gratifyingly inane you can't help but love it. Next stop, the Ramblas!

Video:

Holland: Video For Pleasure - 87m 59s, letterboxed at 1.77:1, Dutch subtitles, obtrusive print noise, superimposed video title as **Wide Eyed in the Dark**.

Italy: GVR General Video Recording - letterboxed, Italian language with on-screen title **The Secret Killer**. Contains a different opening credits sequence.
USA: Prism Entertainment - 'R' rated version as **Eyeball**.

FASHION CRIMES

La morte e' di moda ('Death and Fashion')
Crimes sur mesure (France 'Crimes Above Measurement')
1986 Italy colore LV (Luciano Vittori) 90m
Production Company: L'Immagine S.r.l.
Director: Joe Brenner [Bruno A. Gaburro]
Producer: Luciano Appignani
Story and Screenplay: Luciano Appignani
Cinematography: Sergio Rubini
Editor: Alessandro Lucidi
Art Director: Joseph Teichner
Music: Filippo Trecca
Assistant Director: Maria Luisa Longo
Cast: Anthony Franciosa (*Inspector Rizzo*), Miles O'Keeffe (*Gian Marco Contini*), Teresa Leopardi (*Gloria*), Marina Giulia Cavalli, Luigi Montini, Timothy Brent [Giancarlo Prete] (*Giorgio*), Giuseppe Pambieri, Cesare De Vito, Raffaello Benedetti, Maria Concetta Casella, Louise Kamsteeg

Gloria, a model, is driving home late one evening when her yellow Volkswagen breaks down in a remote spot. She hears opera music coming from a villa nearby and seeks assistance. Bolting back out of the villa in a panic, she is nearly killed by a passing truck. Gloria has amnesia but recalls seeing a woman being murdered by a man. Assisted by Gian Marco, an unorthodox psychiatrist - and coincidentally a co-owner of the villa! - she vainly tries to remember the details of the 'delirium' she experienced. Unfortunately, the killer tries to silence her before she can reveal his/her identity...

The stale rock number which opens this film is suffused with late Eighties saxophone sludge and should alert viewers to what lies ahead. Despite the implication that a fashion house will be the focal point of this superfluous thriller (a minor connection with **Blood and Black Lace**), the viewer has to endure the heroine's repeated flashbacks and scenes of Anthony Franciosa's police detective fishing for a large pike (a rather obvious analogy!). The presence of tired-looking Franciosa only serves to highlight the difference between this formulaic collection of clichés and **Tenebrae**, which stylishly transcends its red herrings and stock characters to offer the viewer much more. Bruno Gaburro's direction is uninspired, proving that he was more at home with languid softcore erotica such as **Malombra**. In truth, he was probably little more than a hired hand on **Fashion Crimes**. The real culprit would seem to be producer Luciano Appignani as he was also responsible for the unconvincing plot and crass script.

Video:

Belgium and Holland: Concorde/Excalibur - 86m 45s, full screen, English language, Dutch subtitles as **Fashion Crimes**.
Greece: HVC - 86m 43s, full screen, English language, Greek subtitles as **Fashion Crimes**.
Italy: Playtime Home Video - 86m 42s, full screen as **La morte é la moda**.

FATAL FRAMES

Fotogrammi mortali

1996 Italy Kodak Eastmancolor Dolby Stereo 137m
Production Company: Sail Productions in association with Mediaset
Director: Al Festa
Producer: Stefania Di Giandomenico
Story: Al Festa, Alessandro Monese
Screenplay: Alessandro Monese
Cinematography: Giuseppe Berardini
Editor: Maurizio Baglivo
Art Director: Antonio Visione

Music and Songs: Al Festa
Special Effects: Steve Johnson
Cast: Stefania Stella (*Stefania Stella*), Rick Gianasi (*Alex Ritt*), David Warbeck (*Inspector Bonelli*), Leo Daniel (*David Antonucci*), Ugo Pagliai (*Inspector Valenti*), Alida Valli (*Contessa Alessandra Mirafiori*), Geoffrey Copleston (*Mr. Fairbrain*), Linnea Quigley (*Wendy Williams*), Massimo Pittarello (*Calzetta*), Marcel Malcoun (*Luca Antonucci*), Andea Festa (*Marini*), Giorgio Albertazzi (*father*), Rossano Brazzi (*Doctor Lucidi*), Ciccio Ingrassia (*beggar*), Angus Scrimm (*man in cemetery*), Donald Pleasence (*Professor Robinson, an FBI agent*), Nina Soldano (*Tamara*), Veronica Logan (*Rebecca*), Carmelinda Prester (*Greta*), Marinella Furgivele (*first American girl*), Cinzia Scalzi (*second American girl*), Cinzia Berni (*third American girl*), Giovanna Nodari (*fourth American girl*), Giorgia Bongianini (*Isabel*), Massimo Lavagnini (*'maniac cop'*).

A young boy discovers his father watching footage of a woman being tortured and killed. New York: Alex Ritt, a successful pop video director, agrees to film a promo for an Italian singer called Stefania Stella, in Rome. On his first evening in the 'Eternal City', Alex witnesses a dancer being murdered with a machete. The police find no body but next day receive a video of the killing, apparently filmed by the murderer. Furthermore, it is revealed that the director's wife Isabel was killed in New York by a 'Video Killer' who was never caught. Alex is lured to the Colosseum and is powerless to stop another young woman from being slaughtered but again there is no body. An FBI agent and Isabel's father arrive in Rome to assist with the investigation. All the evidence suggests that Alex is the killer...

Al Festa's overblown trash epic is an hilarious star turn for the dubious talents of Stefania Stella, his singer-wife. Like the Hindi films of popular Indian cinema, the narrative in **Fatal Frames** takes a back seat each time Festa wants to feature his wife in an extended dancing and singing sequence. The difference is that the audience for Bollywood spectacles expect, and look forward to, these musical interludes whereas the intended audience for this gory whodunnit will suffer impatiently through Stefania's bland numbers (all Al's compositions), or hit the fast forward button. These intrusive ditties are filmed in typical 'rock video' format and, unfortunately, the director's background in this medium is translated to the rest of the film. Aside from a few dialogue scenes which are mercifully shot in daylight and the 'Video Killer's own footage, nearly every other scene in this one-hundred-and-thirty-seven-minute (count 'em as they crawl by) monster is shot through an impenetrable blue - or occasionally red - filter, and if it's a nocturnal set-up



When the screen is usually choked with dry ice. Basically, the entire film is governed by a tired over-reliance on this outdated look, following other recent abominations such as the 1975 Brescia's **Omicidio a luci blu**. Then there are the actors: a parade of elders shuffle through the proceedings and only serve to irritate the audience of the better movies they have appeared in (Donald Pleasence's departure to the strains of the **Halloween** theme is a particularly sad moment, considering that he was during production and the person in this movie exit is a lookalike). Scream Queen Linnea Quaid (the product of a particularly useless American fad for untalented bimbos covered in make-up) is drafted in as an unlikely parapsychologist and makes no impression whatsoever, while the film's 'name saviour' David Warbeck, playing in the role of a perennially angry detective, rants and raves as if he is trying to make up for the rest of the cast's inertia. Meanwhile, Stella and some of the pony-tailed male cast have pronounced accents which make them difficult to understand. The film's protagonist, Rick Gianasi, fails to ignite the screen, even when he gets off with Loredana Romito, and the dialogue scenes the duo are excruciatingly clumsy. The only positive aspects of this misjudged exercise are the gratuitously tacky examples of the psycho Killer's handiwork and the reliably ludicrous climax which, to use a thoroughly appro-

priate cliché, has to be seen to be believed! Surprisingly, in view of the final revelations (guaranteed to leave most viewers with their mouths wide-open in disbelief), **Fatal Frames** is not only an apt title but cleverly ironic. Pity the remainder of the film isn't as inspired. Readers wishing to know more, including the straight-faced pronouncements of unintentional comedians Festa and Stella, should refer to David Flint's hilarious account of this turkey's UK premiere in issue 5 of **Delirium**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Vivimusic CD.

FATAL TEMPTATION

1987 Italy Fuji Color LV (Luciano Vittori) 87m

Production Company: Real Film S.r.l. (Rome)

Director: Bob J. Ross [Enrico Grassi]

Story: based on a story by Eric Grass [Enrico Grassi]

Screenplay: Bob J. Ross [Enrico Grassi]

Cinematography: Franco Delli Colli

Editor: Enrico Grassi

Art Director: Maurizio Leonardi

Music: Sarius and Cestana

Assistant Director: Claudia Sion

Cast: Loredana Romito (*Carla*), John Armstead,

Ann Margaret Hughes, James Villemaire,

Carmen Manzano.

Carla is the attractive wife of Paolo, the owner

of a plush country hotel. Following a car accident involving a young motorcyclist, Paolo is temporarily blinded, and his wife takes over the running of the hotel. She hires Alessio, the motorcyclist, as a handyman. Having discovered Paolo, still without sight, in bed with his mistress she seeks satisfaction with Alessio. After sexual coercion, the young man reluctantly agrees to murder Paolo and seizing an opportunity, pushes him off a cliff into the sea. The hotel maid, who has been carrying on with Alessio, discovers the murder plot and attempts blackmail. Carla coolly responds by shooting the maid in the head and roping in her young lover to help dispose of the body. Although clearly upset by this unforeseen development, he cannot resist Carla's naked body and, despite being smeared with the maid's blood, the pair soon have sex. However, more blood will be spilled before the night has ended... Grassi's erotic thriller contains elements of **The Postman Always Rings Twice**, and as in the passionate remake, murder provides an almighty aphrodisiac: after both acts of annihilation, and despite pangs of conscience, the lovers give reign to their lustful urges. The combination of death and sex is obviously commonplace but here it forms a genuine part of the narrative, rather than being a convenient tool to showcase female flesh (as in a film like **Intimate Crimes**). Not that Grassi shies away from showing Loredana Romito's naked body, in fact he seems more comfortable with the erotic aspects of the story, and keeps the violent images to a minimum. For example, Paolo is shoved off the cliff before any tension has built up and his demise is fleetingly shown via a clichéd and ineffective mannequin. Only one scene, in which the dead man appears to return from his watery grave, promises to take the film into the realms of horror but (as usual) this is revealed to be a nightmare. A shame, because with a few more splashes of bloodshed this unremarkable film might have had more of an impact.

Video:

Italy: Eureka Video; Videogroup/Emerald Video International - 84m 10s, letterboxed as **Fatal Temptation**.

THE FIFTH CORD

Giornata nera per l'Ariete ('Black Day For Arians')

Journee noire pour le belier (France)

Jour malefique (France: video sleeve re-title)

Der Schwarze Tag des Widders (Germany 'The Black Day for Arians')

Ein Schwurzer Tag Jurden Widder (Germany: alternate title)

De Vijfde Vinger (Holland)

Silent Killer (Sweden)

Evil Fingers (UK: theatrical title)

El dia negro

1971 Italy Eastmancolor Technichrome 95m

Production Company: Film-Dario/B.R.C. Prod.

Cinematografiche

Director: Luigi Bazzoni

Producer: Manolo Bolognini

Story: based on the novel *The Fifth Cord* by D. M. Devine

Screenplay: Mario Di Nardo, Mario Fenelli,

Luigi Bazzoni

Cinematography: Vittorio Storaro

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Director: Gastone Carsetti

Music and Music Director: Ennio Morricone

Assistant Director: Luciano Marin

Cast: Franco Nero (*Andrea Bild*), Pamela Tiffin

(*Lu Auer*), Maurizio Bonuglia (*Doctor*

Riccardo/Richard Bini), Wolfgang Preiss (*police*

inspector), Edmond Purdom (*Eduard*

Valmont), Ira Furstenberg (*Isabelle Lancer*),

Renato Romano (*Doctor John Lubbock*),

Rossella Falk (*Sophia Bini*), Silvia Monti

(*Helene*), Guido Alberti, Lucio Baroli, Agostina

Belli (*Giulia Soavi*), Corrado Gaipa (*newspaper*

owner), Andrea Scotti, Irio Fantini, Luigi

Antonio Guerra.



While walking home from a New Year's Eve party, Doctor John Lubbock is assaulted in a tunnel by a mysterious assailant. He is saved by the intervention of Isabelle, the woman who has just jilted him, and Walter, her new lover. An alcoholic reporter, Andrea Bild, is assigned to the story but his enquiries are hampered by Richard Bini, one of Lubbock's medical colleagues. Bini's invalid wife is soon strangled and thrown down the stairs. The police become increasingly suspicious about Andrea, especially when his unsympathetic editor expires from a heart attack, having been menaced by the killer. Soon afterwards, Isabelle is found dead in her bath and Julia, a young prostitute who performed sex shows for Doctor Bini and a group of voyeurs, has her throat cut by the murderer. Relying more and more on the demon drink to keep him going, Andrea frantically tries to expose the person who is attempting to frame him...

The Fifth Cord is a core *giallo* containing many of the elements often associated with the genre: a male detective figure who is implicated in the crimes; a black-gloved killer; point-of-view shots; a sleazy sexual sub-plot in which morally corrupt older men exploit young people; stylish camerawork and lighting, a Morricone score with luscious vocals by Edda Dell'Orso; and a suitably preposterous motivation for the murders. The requisite violence is present too - the cruel murder of Bini's invalid wife recalls **A Bay of Blood's** startling opening while twenty-seven years later the slashing of a prostitute was still considered too graphic for the BBFC who removed two seconds from the recent *Redemption* release (that'll protect society!). In keeping with *giallo* convention the killer's motive for murder and the final clues which reveal his identity - it ties in with astrology, hence the original (rather unappealing) title - are unbelievably petty. Despite the culprit's voice-over confession at the start, there are no really deep-rooted subconscious problems to rake over here. Undoubtedly, the most notable aspect of this film is its striking use of visuals. Bazzoni and cinematographer Vittorio Storaro use open spaces, natural light and architectural lines to create stunning scope compositions which are packed with reflections, curves, ellipses and stripes (as used in Bertolucci's **The Conformist**, which links fascism and futurism, and re-iterated in Paul Schrader's **American Gigolo**). The climactic battle between Nero's unorthodox reporter and the rather pathetic killer takes place in an abandoned factory and allows the director to choreograph some great camera set-ups. He previously made **The Possessed** and his next feature was **Footprints**.

Video:

France: Delta Video Diffusion - as **Jour malefique**.

Germany: label unknown.

Holland: Van Gils/Concorde - 88m 34s, letterboxed, Dutch subtitles with sleeve title **The Fifth Cord**. The print has no opening credits!

Italy: Eureka - as *Giornata nera per l'Ariete*.

Sweden: Master Home Video - 87m 24s, letterboxed with title **Silent Killer**. The killer's voice-over at the start is missing.

UK: *Redemption*: 88m 07s, cut by two seconds with a BBFC '18' certificate, letterboxed as **The Fifth Cord**.

Soundtrack:

Germany: Colosseum Schallplatten CD - *More Mondo Morricone* - title theme on this excellent compilation.

Italy: Point Records CD - on a double-bill with **Gli occhi freddi della paura**. Gatto Nero CD - *Murder For Pleasure: Giallo and Thriller Themes* - title theme plus a snippet of dialogue (the murderer ranting).

FIVE DOLLS FOR AN AUGUST MOON

5 bambole per la luna d'agosto

Fem Lig I Fryseren (Denmark: video sleeve title, 'Five Corpses in the Freezer')



'Five Dolls for An August Moon'

5 filles dans une nuit chaude d'été (France 'Five Girls in a Summer Night's Heat')

L'île de l'épouvante (France: alternate title 'Island of Terror')

5 muñecas para la luna de agosto (Spain 'Five Dolls for an August Moon')

5 Dockor I Augustimnen (Sweden)

1970 Italy Eastmancolor 85m

Production Company: P.A.C. (Produzione Atlas Cinematografica)

Director: Mario Bava

Story and Screenplay: Mario Di Nardo

Cinematography: Antonio Rinaldi

Editor: Mario Bava

Art Director and Costumes: Giulia Mafai

Music: Piero Umiliani

Assistant Director: Mario Bianchi

Cast: William Berger (*Professor Gerry Farrell*),

Ira Furstenberg (*Trudy Farrell*), Edwige Fenech

(*Marie Channing*), Howard Ross (Renato

Rossini) (*Jack Davidson*), Helene (Helena)

Ronee (Peggy), Maurice Poli (*Nick Channing*),

Teodoro Corra' (*George Stock*), Edith Meloni

(*Jill*), Justine Gall (Ely Galleani) (*Isabelle, the*

caretaker's daughter), Mauro Bosco (*Charles, the houseboy*).

Several guests are invited to George Stock's modern island villa. However, the atmosphere is tense. Professor Farrell has a revolutionary formula for synthetic resin which George, and two fellow industrialists, Nick and Jack, desperately want to acquire. They offer Farrell a million dollars but he refuses, explaining that his best friend has already died because of the formula and that he wants it to benefit humanity. Farrell decides to leave after Nick tries to offer

him a separate deal, however the only small boat on the island has disappeared. Charles, the houseboy, is found dead on the beach. To save his body from being eaten by crabs, they place it in a walk-in freezer. Farrell is found shot dead on the beach and his body disappears. One by one, the other guests are murdered and placed in the freezer. Eventually, only George, Jack and Trudy, the Professor's wife, remain... Often dismissed as one of Bava's weakest efforts, **Five Dolls** was undertaken by the gifted director as part of a contractual obligation and there is definitely a sense of a major talent merely going through the motions. But what motions! The speed with which this adaptation of Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Indians* was lensed is evident by the plethora of zooms, odd panning shots and a few untypically clumsy edits. At the time of its release, these short-cuts were jumped on by critics who expected more and snipers have continued to shoot derogatory words at the film ever since. P.A.C. in-house scripter Mario Di Nardo's unfocused screenplay is undeniably a drawback because murder mysteries have to rely on reasonably solid character motivations and **Five Dolls** never satisfactorily resolves its loose ends. But there is still much to enjoy. The sexual intrigues and double-dealing on show are entertaining enough in themselves and the film benefits from a cast of seasoned performers. Despite the haste in which it was made, certain images stand-out: the corpses hung in plastic bags in the freezer, Fenech in crimson bra and panties hung from a tree by a large dagger, the wave of glass balls which leads the camera to another dead body and the opening dance routine in which

Teodoro Corra' wears a golden demon mask. Connoisseurs of kitsch will also be delighted by the performers' costumes, the brightly-lit and gaudily furnished decor and Umiliani's playful, Hammond organ-drenched score.

Video:

Australia: Goldseal - 78m 46s as **Five Dolls For An August Moon**. Opening credits appear against a plain black background.

Denmark: Film-Lab - 79m 08s, letterboxed.

France: label unknown.

Italy: PAC - as **5 bambole per la luna d'agosto**.

Japan: label unknown.

Sweden: Trix - letterboxed at 1.77:1 as **Five Dolls For An August Moon**.

UK: Redemption - 78m 20s, letterboxed as **Five Dolls For An August Moon**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero CD - *Murder for Pleasure:*

Giallo and Thriller Themes - title track only;

Easy Tempo Vol.3 - this compilation features selected themes.

FIVE WOMEN FOR THE KILLER

5 donne per l'assassino

Day Killer (Germany: video re-title)

Cinco mujeres para un asesinato (Spain)

1974 Italy/France Technicolor Techniscope

Production Company: Thousand Cinematografica (Rome)/Les Film La Boetie (Paris)

Director: Stelvio Massi

Story: Roberto Gianviti, Gianfranco Clerici

Screenplay: Roberto Gianviti, Gianfranco Clerici, Vincenzo Mannino

Cinematography: Sergio Rubini

Editor: Mauro Bonanni

Music and Music Direction: Giorgio Gaslini

Assistant Director: Andre Delacroix, Daniele Sangiorgi

Cast: Francis Matthews (*Giorgio Pisani*), Pascale

Favault (*Lydia Franzl*), Giorgio Albertazzi

Professor Aldo Betti), Howard Ross (*Renato*

Bossini) (*police inspector*), Katia Christine (*Alba*

Galli, *Giorgio's nanny*), Catherine Diamant

Oriana, *a journalist*), Gabriella Lepori (*Sofia*),

Maria Cumani Quasimodo, Milvia Bonamore,

Torquato Tessarin, Amedeo Baratti, Franco

Moraldi, Ugo Pompognini, Piero Corbetta,

Elena Mercuri, Edmondo Sannazzaro, Alberto

Carrera, Lorenzo Piani, Carla Mancini, Ennia

Rossetto, Lia Bresciani, Ilona Staller.

Giorgio Pisani, a journalist, arrives back from an overseas assignment to discover his wife Enka dead and their new-born baby in intensive care. Lydia Franzl, his doctor friend, informs Giorgio that he was sterile, therefore his wife (who was desperate for a child) must have consorted with another man. Three women are brutally murdered, but the journalist's new lover is saved just before she is about to be butchered too. There are two killers...

Reviewed from the German video release, which cheekily retitles the film 'John Carpenter's **Day Killer**', this is a rather shoddy attempt to wring further money out of already well-worn *giallo* themes by increasing the level of sexual violence (it comes as no surprise that the same script team came up with **The New York Ripper**). The murders are certainly nasty - female victims are slashed from their vaginas so to their stomachs and their breasts are ritually mutilated - but these outrages are used almost subliminally (so that the inadequacies of the effects are less obvious). Director Stelvio Massi specialised in fast-paced cop thrillers such as **Mark the Narc**, **Destruction Force** and **The 44 Specialist**, and later made **The Black Angel**, another sleazy murder mystery. In **Five Women** he includes a smattering of stylistic flourishes - such as a shot through the magnified images of fingerprints - in order to raise the proceedings above the level of a mere detective story but it actually looks more like a cheap sex flick. Only the final section, in



which Giorgio's nanny/lover and the baby are terrorised by an axe wielding killer, reveals any conviction (these scenes make you wonder why the Germans didn't go the whole hog and re-title the film 'Five Women For Halloween'). Unemotive Englishman Francis Matthews was obviously drafted in to add some minor appeal to the foreign sales market and it's strange to see Howard Ross, normally typecast in smarmy villainous roles, as a straightforward police detective. Aside from his rather downbeat main title theme, Giorgio Gaslini's score occasionally lapses into some very strange electronics and experimental jazz (recalling his finest work with Edda Dell'Orso in 1969's **Le sorelle**).

Video:

Germany: Sunrise Video - 89m 32s with a

superimposed video title as **Day Killer**

Italy: Domovideo - letterboxed as **5 donne per l'assassino**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero CD - *Murder for Pleasure:*

Giallo and Thriller Themes - This compilation contains the title theme.

FOOTPRINTS

Le orme ('Footprints')

Footprints on the Moon (Greece: video sleeve title)

Painajaisesta Tulee Tosi (Finland: video sleeve title)

Primal Impulse (USA: video re-title)

1974 Italy Technicolor 110m

Production Company: Cinemarte

Director: Luigi Bazzoni

Producer: Luciano Perugia, Marina Cigogna

Story: based on *Las huerras* by Mario Fenelli

Screenplay: Mario Fenelli, Luigi Bazzoni

Cinematography: Vittorio Storaro

Editor: Roberto Perpignani

Art Director: Pierluigi Pizzi

Music: Nicola Piovani

Cast: Florinda Bolkan (*Alice Cespi*), Peter

McEnery (*Harry*), Nicoletta Elmi (*Paula Burton*),

Caterina Boratto, John Carlsen (*Alfred*

Lowenthal), Evelyn Stewart (*Ida Galli*) (*Mary*),

Myriam Acevedo (*Rosemary*), Klaus Kinski

(*Professor Blackmann*), Lila Kedrova (*Mrs*

Hims), Esmerelda Ruspoli.

Alice has a recurring nightmare which she traces back to a childhood viewing of a film called 'Footprints on the Moon'. The unsettling dream involves a callous experiment conducted

by a sinister organisation in which an astronaut is deliberately stranded on the lunar surface. She is sacked from her job as a translator due to her extended absences - which result from memory loss and her reliance on tranquillizers. Troubled by a postcard she receives from Garma, she travels to this faded tourist spot in search of answers. She encounters a young girl, Paula, who informs her that she looks exactly like Nicole, a woman who is apparently already staying at the almost deserted resort. Alice's search for the truth leads to murder and brings her nightmare into full perspective.

Footprints opens intriguingly with the bizarre lunar-located nightmare suffered by Alice and continues to arouse the viewer's curiosity as the young woman's outwardly well-ordered life - her apartment is immaculate - collapses around her. Once in Garma, the bewildered woman's encounters with people who profess to recognise her and the almost empty resort itself (with stunning mosques and a suitably grandiose hotel - which recalls the imposing building in **Daughters of Darkness**) propel the viewer further into the mystery.

Unfortunately, **Footprints** then begins to falter: Alice's increasingly perplexed state of mind takes up scene after scene, prompting an (ironic) sense of déjà-vu. Finally, there comes a point when most viewers will lose interest in her neuroses. This is a shame because Bolkan's performance is impressive, Piovani's gentle score recalls his evocative themes for **The Perfume of the Lady in Black** and the film is directed with consummate style by Bazzoni using the same kind of geometric imagery he deployed in the superior **The Fifth Cord**. Certain odd images, such as Alice being chased in slow motion across a beach by two figures in astronaut suits, have a genuine resonance which could have made the film a cult favourite were it not for the drawn-out psychological searching.

Video:

Denmark: label unknown - letterboxed as **Footprints**.

Finland: Videce AB - 88m 40s, letterboxed,

Finnish subtitles as **Footprints**.

Greece: Video Cronos - 88m 32s, full screen as **Footprints** with sleeve title **Footprints on the Moon**.

Italy: Ricordi, Gala Film - approx. 107m. Both releases as **Le orme**.

UK: Redemption - forthcoming as **Footprints**.

USA: Lightning Video as **Primal Impulse**.

Italian video sleeve for 'The Forbidden Room'





'The Forbidden Room'

THE FORBIDDEN ROOM

Anima persa ('Lost Soul')

Ames perdues (France 'Lost Soul')

Alma perdida (Spain 'Lost Soul')

1976 Italy/France Technospes Vistavision 102m

Production Company: Dean Film (Rome)/Fox Europa (Paris)

Director: Dino Risi

Producer: Pio Angeletti, Adriano De Micheli

Story: based on a novel by Giovanni Arping

Screenplay: Dino Risi, Bernadino Zapponi

Cinematography: Tonino Delli Colli

Editor: Alberto Gallitti

Music: Francis Lai

Art Director and Costumes: Luciano Ricceri

Cast: Vittorio Gassman (*Fabio Stolz*), Catherine Deneuve (*Elisa Stolz*), Danilo Mattei (*Tino Zanetti*), Anicee Alvina (*Lucia Pandin*), Ester Carloni (*Annetta*), Michele Capnist (*Duke*), Gino Cavalieri (*Professor Santini*), Aristide Caporale (*old man in gambling house*).

Tino, an adolescent, goes to stay with his Aunt Elisa and Uncle Fabio in a fine old Venetian mansion. The young man is disturbed by noises coming from the attic but is sternly warned never to investigate. He becomes acquainted with Lucia, an attractive teenage girl who models nude for his art class, and while his aunt and uncle are attending a funeral he invites her back to the mansion. The inquisitive pair peer into the attic via a peephole and are startled to see a leering babbling madman. Unfortunately,

their transgression is discovered by Uncle Fabio and Tino is severely admonished. Sometime later, the identity of the secret attic dweller is inadvertently revealed...

The Forbidden Room is an eerie mystery drama which expertly contrasts youthful uncertainties and blossoming sexual desires with the serious, and at times morbid, adult world. That old horror standby, 'the thing in the attic' is used discreetly (there are no monstrous scares, just an overwhelming atmosphere of unease) as a basis to explore more complex themes. Dino Risi handles the largely sedate proceedings with a gentle touch similar to some of Pupi Avati's productions (such as *Dove comincia la notte*). Scenes of Danilo Mattei attempting to reveal the secrets of the old mansion remind one that co-scripter Bernadino Zapponi co-wrote *Deep Red*.

Video:

Italy: Dean Film - 97m 32s, full screen; RCS Films & TV. Both releases as **Anima persa**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: CAM LP with fourteen tracks; CAM single with two tracks.

THE FORBIDDEN PHOTOS OF A LADY ABOVE SUSPICION

Le foto proibite di una signora per bene ('The Forbidden Photos of a Respectable Lady')

Dias de angustia (Spain 'Days of Anguish')

Du Skal Domin Elskede (Denmark: video sleeve title 'You Must Die My Love')

Photos interdites d'une bourgeoise (France 'Photos Taken of a Bourgeois Woman')

1970 Italy/Spain Technicolor Techniscope 96m

Production Company: Produzione

Cinematografica Mediterranea

(Rome)/C.C.Trebol (Madrid)

Director: Luciano Ercoli

Producer: Alberto Pugliese, Luciano Ercoli

Story and Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi, May Velasco

Cinematography: Alejandro Ulloa

Editor: Luciano Ercoli

Music: Ennio Morricone

Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: May Velasco

Cast: Dagmar Lassander (*Minou*), Pier Paolo Capponi (*Pierre/Peter*), Simon Andreu (*black-mailer*), Susan Scott (*Nieves Navarro*) (*Dominique*), Osvaldo Genazzani (*Inspector Frank Weeks*), Salvatore Huguet (*George*).

Minou, the attractive young wife of a businessman, is menaced by a mysterious man at the beach. The sadistic stranger runs a sharp blade over her body and infers that her husband Pierre is a killer. Taking the advice of her close friend Dominique, Minou tries to forget the incident. However, she begins to suspect that Pierre may have murdered Jean Dubois, a business associate to whom he owed money, especially when the stranger offers proof in the form of a tape recording. In order to protect her husband, she submits to degrading sexual acts. Unfortunately, the blackmailer then threatens to send photos of their activities to Pierre unless she agrees to further degradation. On Dominique's advice, Minou tells Pierre everything. Initially, he is upset but eventually agrees to call in the police. However, the police can find no evidence of the blackmailer's existence and it is suggested that she fantasised the incidents. Minou becomes more paranoid about the presence of the stranger and when he suddenly re-appears she is saved by Pierre...

Forbidden Photos is a superlative erotic thriller from an era when political correctness didn't exist. This glossy production is permeated with intrigue, blackmail and fetishistic violence, superbly augmented by a particularly lush Morricone score. As was often the case in Euro flicks, the male leads are either unsympathetic (Capponi) or downright nasty (Andreu), precipitating Dagmar Lassander's descent into a mire of sedatives, alcohol and sleazy sex (reminiscent of Carroll Baker's ordeal in **Paranoia/Orgasmo**). Her unusual predicament gives rise to her screaming "Peter, Peter" every few moments, but this is a mild irritation. In fact, Lassander is thoroughly plausible as the

Modish Spanish artwork for 'The Forbidden Photos.....'



AU SEUIL DE LA SOUFFRANCE,
COMMENCE LA DESCENTE AUX ENFERS...



UN FILM DE MARTIN HERBERT AVEC CHRISTINA NAGY, DAVID WARBECK, CAROLL BLUMENBERG.
SCÉNARIO DE JULIAN WILSON. PHOTOGRAPHIE DE LAWRENCE BARKEY.
PRODUIT ET DISTRIBUÉ PAR FRANCK WALKER ET MARTIN HERBERT.

'Formula for a Murder'

[Gianlorenzo Battaglia]
Editor: Vincent P. Thomas [Vincenzo Tomassi]
Art Director: Julian Wilson
Music: Francesco De Masi
Cast: Christina Nagy (*Joanna*), David Warbeck (*Craig*), Carroll Blumenberg (*Ruth*), Rossano Brazzi (*Doctor Sernich*), Andrea Bosic (*Father Peter Farlow*), Loris Loddi (*Father Davis*), Daniela De Carolis, Adriana Giuffrè, Rodolfo Ruzza.

Boston, 1960: a "phony priest" rapes an eleven year-old girl and then pushes her down a flight of stone steps.

The present: in a confessional box, a black-gloved man in priestly garb admits that he is compelled to kill. The man then slashes his confessor's throat. Wheelchair-bound Joanna (the girl in the prologue, now grown-up) is in training for a sports event despite her paralysis. She is revealed to be a wealthy woman, who has founded a hospital for paraplegics and can remember nothing of her childhood trauma. She marries Craig, her fitness instructor, which seems to cause resentment from Ruth, her personal secretary (she apparently has a lesbian crush on her employer). A young priest is viciously beaten to death by the maniac, who is revealed to be Craig. However, there are further revelations...

The Fulvia production stamp, the presence of David Warbeck, the Big Apple locations and Francesco De Masi's self-referential **New York Ripper** score all point to Lucio Fulci as the culprit, but this well-paced psycho tale is the work of Alberto De Martino, the man behind **Blood Link**. The main plot twist is a genuine surprise - because it has no logical basis - and from thereon the film becomes an enjoyably over-the-top exercise in grand guignol. It's a shame that De Masi's cheap-sounding synth score - which would be more appropriate roaming the aural wasteland of a post-Apocalypse atrocity rather than a thriller - is allowed to periodically intrude because the aforementioned snatches of his memorable **Ripper** theme remind the viewer that he is capable of much better.

Although **Formula For a Murder** was conceived from a tried and tested... er, formula (Hammer's **Taste of Fear** wheels into mind), Luigi Russo's ineffectual **Dangerous Women** demonstrates how similarly themed material can be ruined by a static attitude. De Martino is reportedly unhappy with **Formula For a Murder** because he was constrained by an eighteen day shooting schedule but the resulting movie is certainly nothing to be ashamed about (unlike his next collaboration with Warbeck, the dreadful **Miami Golem**). In the English language version under review, Warbeck's voice is dubbed by another actor so it's difficult to fully appreciate his performance. Eleven years on, he and Rossano Brazzi were both in **Fatal Frames**.

Video:

France: Delta Video Diffusion - letterboxed as **Formule pour un meurtre**.
Greece: Rex Films Home Video - 84m 54s, full screen, English language with Greek subtitles on black bars as **Formula For a Murder**.
Italy: Star Video - letterboxed as **7 Hyden Park - La casa maledetta**.
Japan: label unknown - letterboxed at 2.35:1, English language, Japanese subtitles as **Formula For a Murder**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Beat CD - on a double-bill with **Seven Murders For Scotland Yard**.

FOUR FLIES ON GREY
VELVET

4 mosche di velluto grigio
Quatre mouches de velours gris (France)
Vier Vliegen op Grijs Fluweel (Belgium)
Fire Fluer (Denmark)
Fier Fliegen auf Grauem Samt (Germany)
Quatro moscas de veludo (Portugal)

...er heroine. Her overtly vulnerable personality is typical stereotyping but is neatly balanced by the assertive bisexual figure played by Susan Scott - who, at one point, claims that she would have adored being married. Ercoli's film is sometimes predictable, but is effortlessly entertaining, and preferable to the rather convoluted *gialli* such as **Try Out in Terror** and **Death Walks in High Heels** (both vehicles for Scott, his wife).

Video:

France: label unknown.
Germany: label unknown - 91m 50s, letterboxed as **The Forbidden Photos of a Lady Above Suspicion**.
Italy: CNR Video - 91m 49s, letterboxed as **The Forbidden Photos of a Lady Above Suspicion**.
Japan: Redemption - 92m 05s, letterboxed, superb quality as **The Forbidden Photos of a Lady Above Suspicion**.

Soundtrack:

Germany: Colosseum Schallplatten CD - *Mondo*

Morricone - three themes on this excellent compilation; Colosseum Schallplatten CD - *More Mondo Morricone*; another theme appears on this compilation.
Italy: Point Records CD - on a double-bill with **Il segreto**; Screen Trax CD - *La Paura secondo Morricone* - this compilation features the title track.

FORMULA FOR A MURDER

7 Hyden Park - *La casa maledetta* ('7 Hyden Park - The Cursed House')

Formule pour un meurtre (France 'Formula for a Murder')

Das Haus der Verfluchten (Germany 'The House of the Cursed')

1985 Italy Telecolor Cinemascope 86m
Production Company: Fulvia International Films S.r.l.

Director: Martin Herbert [Alberto De Martino]

Producer: David Colby

Story and Screenplay: Martin Herbert [Alberto De Martino], Frank Walker [Vincenzo Mannino]

Cinematography: Lawrence Barkey



Cuatro moscas sobre terciopelo gris
(Spain)

1971 Italy/France Technicolor Techniscope
101m

Production Company: Seda Spettacoli
(Rome)/Universal Productions (Paris)

Director: Dario Argento

Producer: Salvatore Argento

Story: Dario Argento, Luigi Cozzi, Mario Foglietti

Screenplay: Dario Argento

Cinematography: Franco Di Giacomo

Editor: Francoise Bonnot

Art Director: Enrico Sabbatini

Music: Ennio Morricone

Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Cast: Michael Brandon (*Roberto Tobias*), Mimsy Farmer (*Nina Tobias*), Jean-Pierre Marielle (*Gianni Arrosio*), Francine Racette (*Dalia*), Bud Spencer [Carlo Pedersoli] (*Diomede/Godfrey*), Aldo Bufi Landi (*coroner*), Calisto Tanzi (*Carlo*)

Eye catching design for the French video release of 'Four Flies on Grey Velvet'



Marosi), Marisa Fabbri (*Amelia, the maid*), Oreste Lionello (*the 'professor'*), Fabrizio Moroni (*Mirko*), Stefano Satta-Flores (*Andrea*), Constanza Spada (*Maria Pia*), Gianni Di Benedetto (*funeral exhibition visitor*), Dante Cleri, Guerrino Crivello, Tom Felleghy [Tomasso Felleghy] (*Inspector Pini*), Fulvio Mingozzi, Stefano Oppedisano, Ada Pometti, Jacques Stany [Stanislav] (*psychiatrist*), Sandro Dori (*first funeral exhibition attendant*), Renzo Marignano (*second funeral exhibition attendant*).

Roberto Tobias, a rock drummer, follows a stranger who has been tailing him for weeks into an apparently empty theatre. In the ensuing struggle, Roberto fatally stabs the stranger with his own flick-knife. Meanwhile, a figure in a carnival mask photographs the incident. The musician is subsequently tormented by letters, snapshots of the crime and the masked man, who threatens him in his own home. Under pressure, he confesses his 'crime' to Nina, his wife, and Godfrey, his eccentric friend. The Tobias' maid discovers the identity of the interloper and is killed in a park. The stranger, whose death in the theatre is revealed to have been staged, is beaten to death by his employer when he tries to get more money. Roberto sends his wife away for her own protection and hires Arrosio, a camp private eye. The self-deprecating detective soon works out the killer's identity but is punished for this successful stroke of detection by a fatal injection into his heart. Nina's cousin, Dalia - who has a brief sexual fling with Roberto - is also savagely murdered. The police remove one of the dead woman's eyes and manage to capture the final image from her retina, which looks like four flies in an arc. Roberto ends up being forced to unmask the tormentor himself...

Considerably more style-conscious than *Cat O'Nine Tails*, Argento's third thriller reveals a director frustrated by the constraints of the whodunnit formula, so beginning to explore ways of transporting his audience into different worlds. This process would lead gradually onto *Deep Red*, his pièce-de-résistance, and *Suspiria*, his full-blown assault on the senses. *Four Flies* is therefore a transitional film which maintains a detective framework but incorporates a bizarre pseudo-scientific idea; the images of the suspended insects which reveal the killer's identity are even more dubious than the XYY chromosome theory in his previous thriller. Moreover, there is the protagonist's recurring nightmare in which he sees a youth executed in a Middle-Eastern square. Not the sort of imagery usually seen in a murder mystery. Indeed, the strength of this film lies in its superb visuals (the storyline is relatively straightforward) and the ostentatious director wastes no opportunity to explore with his camera. Shots leading from a telephone box into the city's underground cable system and up to the killer's lair may seem unnecessarily contrived but they remain with the viewer long after scenes from less flamboyant films have vanished from the memory. Other camera-centric conceits include the rotating shots within a padded cell (clearly an analogy for the killer's mind) and the much-touted super-slow motion crash which propels the killer (and the viewer) into the rear of a truck amidst a shower of shattering glass (a similar shot was used in *Phenomena*). The film's main weaknesses lie with its uninspiring leads - Brandon (admittedly, not the director's first choice) is a serviceable hero/victim but lacks the personable edge of a David Hemmings or even Anthony Franciosa - and Farmer hardly lights up the screen in a part where she has little to do. The supporting characters are required to fill the emotional void and supply the human touch: the camp private eye; Bud Spencer's God; the Professor; and Roberto's lover Dalia. Unfortunately, Argento also includes some of the unnecessary humour which would later mar *Deep Red* slightly but this is a minor quibble. The film's impact is also lessened by Morricone's score which is uncharacteristically unappealing.

Video:

Belgium: Metropole - 95m, letterboxed.
France: Melisa Video - letterboxed; Atlantic.
Both as *Quatre mouches de velours gris*.
Greece: Sunset Video - French language, Greek subtitles - as *Quatre mouches de velours gris*.

Note: A European English language bootleg, running 93m 27s, which cleverly poses as a regular US release on the fictitious 'Silver Star' label, is the most widely available tape in circulation. Taken from a damaged 16mm print with sound deficiencies this release is at least on a high-grade tape and fully scoped.

Soundtrack:

USA: 'An Ennio Morricone - Dario Argento Trilogy' - fifteen track compilation of music from *The Bird With the Crystal Plumage*, *The Cat O'Nine Tails* and *Four Flies on Grey Velvet*, plus a five minute interview.

THE FOURTH VICTIM

In fondo alla piscina ('At the Bottom of the Swimming Pool')

La ultima Senora Anderson (Spain 'The Last Mrs Anderson')

Das Geheimnis von Schloss Monte Christo (Germany 'The Mystery of Castle Monte Christo')

Death at the Deep End of the Swimming Pool

1971 Italy/Spain Technicolor Techniscope
87m

Production Company: Tritone Film Industria (Rome)/Filmayer Produccion/Estudios Cin. cos Roma (Madrid)

Director: Eugenio Martin

Producer: Manuel Perez Garcia

Story: based on a short story by J. B. Gilford
Screenplay: Vicente Colleto, Santiago Moncada, Sabatino Ciuffini

Cinematography: Guglielmo Mancori

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Director: Ramiro Gomez

Music: Piero Umiliani

Assistant Director: Riccardo Huerta

Cast: Carroll Baker (*Julie Spencer alias Lilian Martin*), Michael Craig (*Arthur Anderson*), Miranda Campa, Marina Malfatti (*Julie Spencer*), José Luis Lopez Vasquez (*Inspector Dunphy*), Enzo Garinei, Philip Ross, Alberto Fernandez, Manuel Gallardo, Alberto Gonzales Espinosa.

Arthur Anderson discovers Gladys, his wife, floating naked in the deep end of his swimming pool. He and Felicity Downing, his loyal housekeeper, drag her body from the water, dress her and call a doctor. The latter signs a death certificate for accidental drowning. However, on the day of Gladys' funeral, a police superintendent informs Arthur that the insurance company have begun a murder investigation. It transpires that she was his third wife and that his two previous spouses also died from accidents. At the subsequent trial, Mrs Downing makes up a story about a drug problem which Gladys was supposed to have had, in order to save her employer from being found guilty. Afterwards the disappointed but dogged superintendent reveals that he is determined to see justice done. Soon after, an attractive neighbour, Julie Spencer, takes a midnight swim in Arthur's pool and then deliberately involves herself with him. After a whirlwind romance they get married. However, Julie is not all she seems...

Many Spanish and Italian horror/thrillers are seen in Blighty but, for the most part, they remain patently Continental. It therefore makes a pleasant change to encounter a *giallo* which is so thoroughly English (complete with quirky humour), it might have been made as a wheeze by some down-at-heel Brits. Fortunately, Piero Umiliani's typically Italian score, which is laced with the heavenly female vocals often used by genre composers, serves as a constant reminder that this is Euro fluff. The tantalizing absurd plot, which was concocted partly by Santiago Moncada (*Hatchet for the Honeymoon*), presents Michael Craig's charac-



as a possible Bluebeard, with a locked door that leads to an attic of dark secrets. However, as Craig emerges as yet another emotionally potent male figure, the female protagonists (Baker and Malfatti) begin to take on sinister overtones, with rampant insanity threatening to break out of every frame. Spanish director Eugenio Martin also contributed **Horror Express** and **A Candle For the Devil**, two reasonably ingratiating terror pics.

Video:
Greece: Master Home Video - Greek subtitles as **The Fourth Victim**.

FOXY LADY

Spiando Marina ('Spying on Marina')
The Smile of the Fox (original export title)
1992 Italy Kodak colour 98m
Production Company: Dania Film/National Cinematografica
Director: George Raminto [Sergio Martino]
Story: George Raminto [Sergio Martino]
Screenplay: Pietro Regnoli, George Raminto [Sergio Martino]

Cinematography: Giancarlo Ferrando
Editor: Albert Morris [Amedeo Moriani]
Music: Luigi Ceccarelli
Special Effects: Roberto Ricci
Assistant Director: Federica Martino
Cast: Debora Caprioglio (*Marina*), Steve Bond (*Mark Derrick*), Sharon Twomey (*Irene*), Leonardo Treviglio (*Hank*), Pedro Loeb (*Steinberg*), Raffaella Offidani (*prostitute*), Raffaele Mottola (*man*), Martin Coria (*Indio*), Roberto Ricci (*Miami killer*).

A professional hitman arrives in Buenos Aires, having been hired to kill an as yet unidentified gang leader. The hitman is revealed to be Mark Derrick, a former Miami cop who was discharged for taking bribes but avoided a prison sentence by informing on various drug dealers. Derrick's wife and son were subsequently blown to pieces by a drugs gang in revenge. Having been provided with an apartment whilst awaiting confirmation of his target, the hitman is intrigued by the sound of Marina, the young woman in the next apartment, singing, crying and having loud orgasms. The lonely, tormented man begins spying on his attractive neighbour and witnesses her having sex with her dominant boyfriend. It is not long before Mark and Marina are involved in a steamy relationship. Matters are complicated when his target is revealed to be her oppressive boyfriend but, having suffered years of physical abuse, she is keen for Mark to fulfill his contract. However, all is not that simple...

Well-endowed Debora Caprioglio (previously seen in Tinto Brass' **Paprika**) plays the eponymous **Foxy Lady** with gusto and a wicked sparkle in her eyes, alternating between a 'little miss innocent', a lusty sex goddess and a cold-hearted minx. In spite of the screen-time taken to elaborate on the reasons for hitman Steve Bond's torment, this sexy thriller is really nothing more than a (welcome) excuse for the candid camera to explore Caprioglio's impressive naked body at every opportunity. The audience are given the added satisfaction of identifying their own thrill with Bond's voyeuristic activities. This borderline entry in the *giallo* canon was filmed in Argentina with a lower budget than usual but is included here because it contains intrigue and sexual games, plus a major plot twist (which is not difficult to guess). It also highlights a former key player's decline into meretricious work (Martino's next erotic thriller was the less satisfying **Craving Desire**).

Video:

Italy: Delta Video - 94m 39s, full screen as **Spiando Marina**.
UK: Rio Pictures - 94m 40s, full screen as **Foxy Lady**.





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EXCITE ME

COLOUR

Cert. 'X'

Anita Strindberg and Luigi Piutilli in 'Gently Before She Dies'

GENTLY BEFORE SHE DIES

Il tuo vizio e' una stanza chiusa e' solo io
ne ho la chiave

('Your Vice is a Locked Room and Only I Have
the Key')

Eye of the Black Cat

De Zwarte Kat (Holland 'The Black Cat')

Excite Me (UK: theatrical title)

1972 Italy Eastmancolor Technochrome 96m

Production Company: Lea Film (Rome)

Director: Sergio Martino

Producer: Luciano Martino

Story: Luciano Martino, Sauro Scavolini freely
adapted from *The Black Cat* by Edgar Allan Poe
Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi, Adriano Bolzoni,
Sauro Scavolini

Cinematography: Giancarlo Ferrando

Editor: Attilio Vincioni

Art Director: Giorgio Bertolini

Music: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: Vittorio Caronia

Cast: Edwige Fenech (*Floriana*), Anita
Strindberg (*Irina*), Luigi Pistilli (*Oliviero
Rouvigny*), Ivan Rassimov (*Dario*), Angela La
Vorgna, Enrica Bonaccorti, Daniela Giordano,
Ermelinda De Felice, Marco Mariani, Nerina
Montagnani, Carla Mancini, Bruno Boschetti,
Franco Nebbia, Riccardo Salvino.

Uncredited Cast: Alan Collins [Luciano Pigozzi].

Oliviero Rouvigny, an alcoholic writer, gains pleasure from humiliating and physically abusing Irina, his wife. She is also tormented by Satan, the cat which belonged to Oliviero's deceased mother. When his young mistress is slashed to death with a sickle, the philandering academic is the main suspect. His black maid is soon butchered with a meat-cleaver, and in order to help avert suspicion, he persuades Irina to wall up the corpse in their cellar. A local prostitute is killed by the mysterious murderer but the latter is in turn murdered by the whore's aunt, seeking revenge. Meanwhile, Oliviero's sexually provocative niece Floriana arrives and soon seduces both Irina and her uncle. Tensions mount when Irina gouges out one of the cat's eyes with a pair of scissors in revenge for his eating of her prize pigeons. She also overhears Oliviero and Floriana planning her demise...

Taking its wonderfully suggestive Italian title, 'Your Vice is a Locked Room and Only I Have the Key', from one of the alarming messages sent by Rassimov to Fenech in *Next!*, this Poe-giallo amalgam is one of Sergio Martino's most alluring features (even though a motor-cross race is an unwelcome intrusion). Like mondo

movies, the film uses its base characters to condemn racism and sexism and yet hypocritically revels in exploiting both. There are also some unfortunate Americanisms ('crummy' and 'ball-breaker' being two examples). But these drawbacks can be found in most Italian exploitation and they are outweighed by the distinctly decadent ambience, cruelly calculating characters and perverse twists. Typically, the Aurum Guide to Horror makes some foolhardy errors by getting the location wrong (it's Italy not Cornwall) and transposing Fenech and Strindberg's roles. The fact that Fenech, who usually plays an abused heroine, is a conniving interloper makes this entry all the more appealing. *Gently Before She Dies* remains shamefully unavailable on video, making it an even more Poe-like trip into the dark recesses of the mind when viewed in a third generation copy.

GIALLO A VENEZIA

('Giallo in Venice')

Thrilling in Venice (sic - publicity sales title)

Pesadelo em Veneza (Brazil: video sleeve re-title)

Crimen sin huella (Brazil, Spain 'Crime Without Tracks')

1979 Italy Telecolor scope 94m

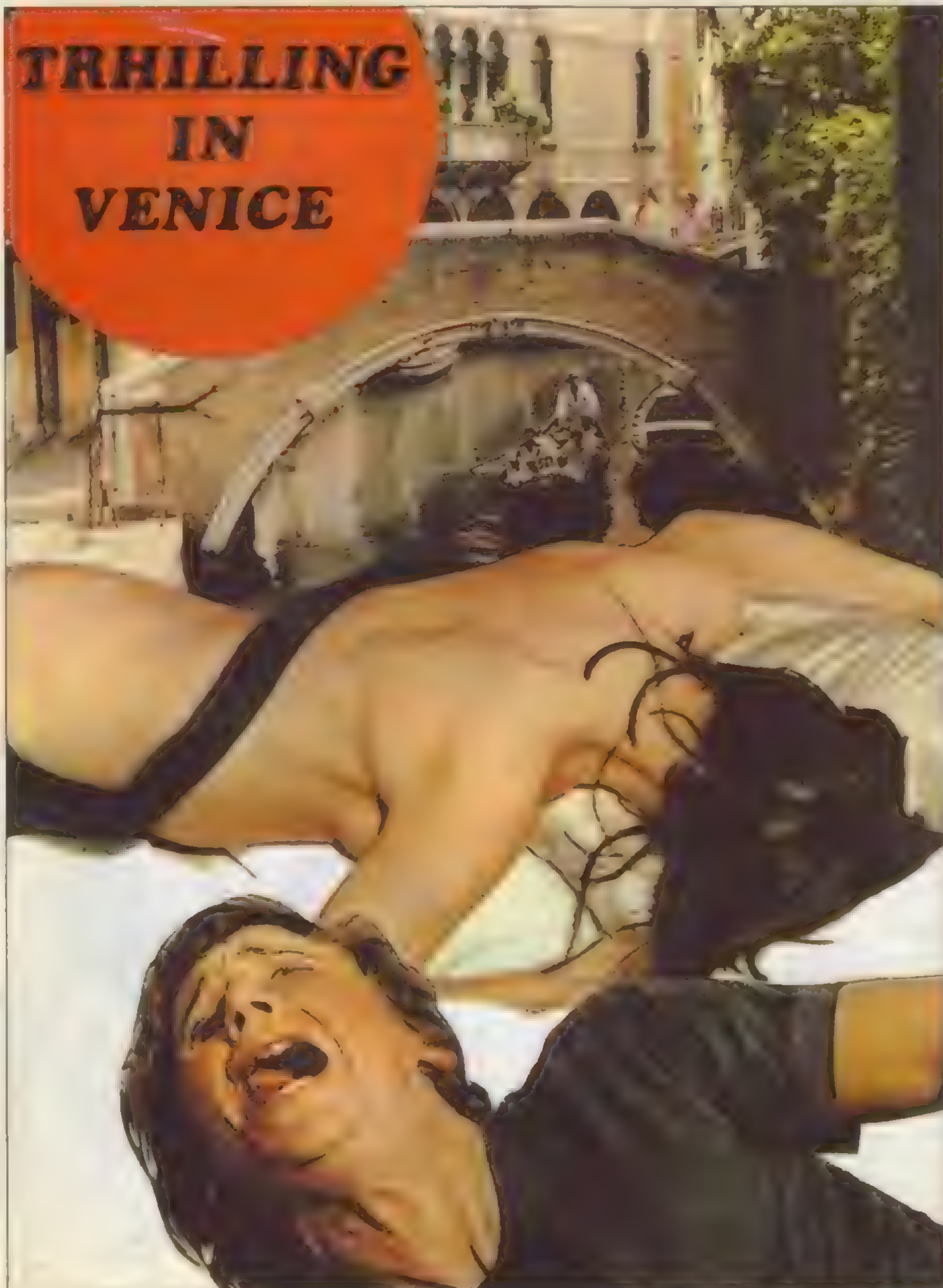
Production Company: Elea Cinematografica

Director: Mario Landi

Producer: Gabriele Crisanti

Story and Screenplay: Aldo Serio

Publicity sheet for 'Giallo a Venezia'



Cinematography: Franco Villa
 Editor: Mario Salvatori
 Art Director: Nunzio De Angelis
 Music: Berto Pisano
 Assistant Director: Roberto Silvestrini
 Cast: Leonora Fani (Eleonora Cristofani) (Flavia), Gianni Dei (Fabio, Flavia's husband), Jeff Blynn (Inspector De Poi), Maria Angela Giordano (Marzia), Vassili Karamesinis (Bruno), Michele Renzullo, Eolo Capritti, Giancarlo Del Duca, Maria Mancini.

Venice: The bodies of a married couple, Flavia and Fabio, are discovered on the dockside. She has drowned and he has been stabbed to death with a large pair of scissors. Marzia, Flavia's best friend, is questioned by the police and a chain of slayings is set in motion. The victims include a prostitute who is stabbed in the back; Marzia's lover, who is shot in the knees before being doused in petrol and set alight; and Marzia herself, tied to a kitchen table and dismembered, before being stuffed in a fridge. Meanwhile, extended flashbacks reveal that Fabio gained perverse pleasure from forcing his young wife to take part in degrading sexual acts...

Giallo a Venezia confronts the viewer immediately with the sight of Gianni Dei's debauched character being agonisingly stabbed in the back! This eye-opener is a mere foretaste of the extreme violence in this scuzzy movie, which also revels in the sordid sexual humiliation which Dei's character enjoys. The film's very highpoint shows Maria Angela Giordano being sliced up on a table top, her torment reflected in the killer's silver sunglasses. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of such outages are seriously undermined by the tawdry production values (the potentially shocking mutilation/murder of the prostitute is badly lit and edited) while even picturesque Venice looks seedy. Jeff Blynn, also in Mario Caiano's brutal **Weapons of Death**, adds to the film's ugliness by playing a police inspector who constantly eats hard-boiled eggs. Given the film's twilit ambience, Berto Pisano's majestic score is patently unsuitable and leads one to suspect that it might have been 'borrowed' from a production with loftier aesthetic values. Troupers Gianni Dei and Maria Angela Giordano were up for more mayhem in producer Gabriele Lantini's next contribution to trash cinema, **Patrick vive ancora**, (which even managed to top their Venetian exploits by turning Maria Angela into a perverse human shish kebab when a long metal poker is seen entering her vagina and exiting via her mouth!)

Video:
 Brazil: label unknown - as **Pesadelo em venezia** with sleeve title **Crimen sin huella**.
 Italy: Star Video - 90m 47s, full screen as **Giallo a Venezia**.
 Spain: label unknown - full screen as **Pesadelo em Veneza**.
 Switzerland: Star Video - as **Giallo a Venezia**.

GIRL IN ROOM 2A

La casa della paura ('The House of Fear')
The Perversions of Mrs Grant (USA: alternate release title)
La chica de la habitacion 2a (Venezuela 'The Girl in Room 2a')
La stranezza della Signora Grant (Italy: shooting title 'The Strangeness of Mrs Grant')
Terror in Room 2a (English language pre-release title)
 1973 Italy Technicolor 100m
 Production Company: Euro Italian Productions
 Director, Producer and Screenplay: William L. Rose
 Cinematography: Mario Mancini
 Editors: Nera Bruni, Gianfranco Simoncelli
 Art Director: Giuseppe Ranieri
 Music: Berto Pisano
 Assistant Directors: Carl Rosen, Ferruccio Castronuovo
 Cast: Daniela Giordano (Margaret), Raf Vallone (Mr. Dreese), John Scanlon (Jack Whitman),



LA FLORIDA CINEMATOGRAFICA PRESENTA



CON
DANIELA GIORDANO • ANGELO INFANTI NELLA PARTE DI FRANK
JOHN SCANLON • ROSALBA NERI • BRAD HARRIS
FRANK LATIMORE CON KARIN SCHUBERT E LA PARTECIPAZIONE DI **RAF VALLONE**

con TELEVISIONE ITALIANA - distribuito da GEMINI - per la zona ITALIA PRODUCTIONS - FLORIDA CINEMATOGRAFICA - EASTMANCOLOR - con TELECOLOR

Italian locandina for 'Girl in Room 2a'

Angelo Infanti (Frank Grant), Karin Schubert (Maria), Rosalba Neri (Alicia Songbird, a social worker), Brad Harris (Charlie, Edie's ex-boyfriend), Frank Latimore, Giovanna Galetti, Nuccia Cardinale, Dada Gallotti, Mariann (sic) Fulci.

A young woman is kidnapped in the street and tortured to death. Her body is later thrown from a cliff to make it look like she committed suicide. Margaret is released from a women's prison and offered a place to stay at a half-way house for ex-offenders, owned by a Mrs Grant.

However, the initially grateful young woman soon finds her room invaded by a red-masked intruder. Mrs Grant and her creepy son Frank (who collects mannequins) are acquainted with Mr. Dreese, an enigmatic individual, who runs an organisation which conducts a war against ex-prison inmates whom they perceive to be 'evil'. Jack, the brother of the young woman who supposedly killed herself, coaxes Margaret into helping him investigate the strange goings on at Mrs Grant's house...

Long-standing speculation about the identity of the (seemingly pseudonymous) director William L. Rose can now be resolved: Rose was an American film-maker who travelled to Rome in order to take advantage of cheap Italian production facilities and locations (the large villa where much of this film takes place was also used as the **Slaughter Hotel**). The resulting movie has an oddly collaborative feel to it; Rose's stilted script is typical of low budget American exploitation with awkward dialogue pauses (like early Harold Pinter!) and characters who are at pains to identify each other again and again. However, these stumbling points are largely confined to the film's first half-hour; once the plot gets in motion this throwaway treatise on the morals of crime and punishment races from one incredulous scene to another, while the locations radiate under the glare of Mario Mancini's crisp cinematography. Other distinguishing features are the brief glimpses of women being tortured (the dotty pre-credits depiction of a naked woman being pierced through the abdomen by a l-o-n-g spear is worthy of Polseili at his finest) and another laughably inappropriate score from Berto Pisano.

Video:

USA: Prism Entertainment - 82m 50s, full screen, good quality print and transfer as **Girl in Room 2a**.

HATCHET FOR THE HONEY-MOON

Il rosso segno della follia ('The Red Sign of Madness')

Un hacha para la luna de miel (Spain 'A Hatchet For the Honeymoon')

Le signe rouge de la folie (France 'The Red Sign of Madness')

La baie sanglante II (France: video re-title: 'Bay of Blood II')

Blood Brides (UK theatrical title and German video title)

1969 Italy/Spain Eastmancolor Movie Lab Color 93m

Production Company: Mercury Cinematografica (Rome)/Pan Latina Films (Madrid)/Películas Ibarra and Cia S.A.

Director: Mario Bava

Producer: Manuel Cano

Screenplay: Mario Bava, Santiago Moncada, Mario Musy

Cinematography: Mario Bava, assisted by Antonio Rinaldi

Editor: Soledad Lopez Ramirez

Art Director: Giulia Mafai

Music: Sante [Maria] Romitelli

Assistant Directors: Lamberto Bava, Ricardo Walker, Mario Bianchi

Cast: Stephen Forsyth (*John Harrington*), Laura Betti (*Mildred Harrington*), Femi Benussi (*Alice*), Alan Collins [Luciano Pigozzi] (*Vences*), Dagmar Lassander (*Helen*), Antonia Mas (*Louise*), Gerard Tichy (*Doctor Kalleway*), Veronica Llimera (*Betsy*), Pasquale Fortunato, Jose' Ignacio Abadaz (*Jimmy*), Silvia Lianas (*Vicky*), Montserrat Riba, Elina De Witt, Bruno Boschetti, Guido Barlocchi (*John as a boy*).

Paris: In less than a year, three women have been hacked to death on their wedding night. Meanwhile, bitchy Mildred Harrington harangues her second husband John about his poor performance in bed. It is revealed that John is the bride killer, making up for his impotence by embedding a hatchet in women's faces before disposing of their bodies in his hot-house leaf incinerator. After each murder he is able to recall more details from his child-



hood about the mysterious death of his mother, whom he apparently adored. Finally, unable to cope any longer with marital arguments, he takes a hatchet to his wife. The increasingly deluded madman imagines that Mildred is still torturing him and gives in to one more murderous deed in order to discover the true nature of his childhood experience...

Despite the fashion house setting Bava's **Hatchet** is nowhere near as delirious as his **Blood and Black Lace**. The mystery element of the film is negligible; it's stunningly obvious who killed the madman's mother (Freud's 'primal scene' comes into play yet again). Nevertheless, the film pays dividends in terms of lighting and camerawork and scenes of Forsyth, clad in a wedding dress stalking his victims amidst mannequins are undeniably effective. The director's wicked touches of black humour include the sight of a smoking chimney as John's latest victim is burnt - which segues neatly into a breakfast scene showing him burning his toast. But the film's best sequence occurs during the aftermath of his wife's murder. The suspicious police inspector, who keeps returning **Columbo**-like to clear up minor points, enquires about the screams which emanated from the house just minutes before. The axe murderer covers himself by showing the detective a scream-filled horror movie (Bava's own **Black Sabbath**) which just happens to be playing on television. Meanwhile, the audience can see the dead woman's corpse hanging over the edge of his bannister, dripping blood just feet away from the inquisitive

inspector. A moment to savour and one that almost has you rooting for the deranged wife-killer. Sante Romitelli's schizoid score, which combines frenzied fear themes with gentle harpsichord melodies and lush orchestrations, adds intensity to the proceedings. The brides-as-murder-victims theme was reworked in **He Knows You're Alone**, an American stalk 'n' slasher from 1980.

Video:

Finland: United Film - 84 28 slightly letterboxed as **Hatchet For the Honeymoon**.

France: Delta Video Diffusion - as **La baie sanglante II**.

Germany - label unknown - full screen as **Blood Brides**.

USA: Charter; VCI; Media; Timeless.

Soundtrack:

Italy: RCA CD - on a double-bill with **Black Sabbath**; Gatto Nero CD - *Murder For Pleasure*; Giallo and Thriller Themes - title theme only.

HITCH-HIKE

Autostop... rosso sangue ('Hitch-Hike... Red Blood')

La proie de l'auto stop (Belgium and France: video sleeve re-title 'The Hitch-hiker's Prey')

Blaffer (Denmark: video sleeve title)

Wenn Du Kriepierst - Lebe Ich! (Germany 'When You Die - I Live!')

Der Todestrip (Germany: alternate title 'The

Death Strip')
Autostop (Poland 'Hitch-Hike')
Autostop alucinate (Portugal)
El cinico y la casada (Spain 'The Cynic and the Married Woman')
Auto stop sangriento (Venezuela)
Never Give a Lift To a Stranger
 1977 Italy Eastmancolor Telecolor 103m
 Production Company: Explorer Film Int S.r.l./Medusa Distribuzione S.r.l.
 Director: Pasquale Festa Campanile
 Producers: Bruno Turchetto, Mario Montanari
 Story: Aldo Crudo, based on Peter Kane's *The Violence and the Fury*
 Screenplay: Ottavio Jemma, Aldo Crudo, Pasquale Festa Campanile
 Cinematography: Franco Di Giacomo, Giuseppe Ruzzolini
 Editor: Antonio Siciliano
 Music: Ennio Morricone
 Art Direction and Costumes: Giantito Burchiellaro
 Assistant Director: Neri Parenti
 Cast: Franco Nero (*Walter Mancini*), Corinne Clery (*Eve Mancini*), David Hess (*Adam Konitz*), John [Gianni] Loffredo (*Louis Hodd*), Carlo Puri (*Oakes*), Pedro Sanchez [Ignazio Spalla] (*bar owner*), Leon Lenior [Leonardo Scavino], Monica Zanchi (*campsite lover*), Benito Pacifico, Angelo Ragusa, Luigi Birri, Robert Sommer, Ann Ferguson, Fausto Di Bella, John P. Dulaney.

Walter and Eve Mancini, an Italian couple, are touring across the USA on a caravan holiday - he is an alcoholic journalist and she is his long-suffering wife. They pick up a hitch-hiker, Adam Konitz, who is revealed to be a psychotic bank robber with a suitcase filled with two million stolen dollars. The tension increases, particularly as Adam keeps making crude sexual advances towards Eve, "the girl with the golden ass". As the Mancinis are forced to drive to Mexico, the two stubborn men become involved in a battle of wits. The cunning reporter tries to alert two motorcycle cops conducting a routine road block but the bank-robber shoots them. That evening, while her husband is forced to watch, Adam begins to rape

Eve. However, the degrading spectacle is swiftly curtailed when two of Adam's cohorts show up and blast their double-crossing ex-partner. The violence continues until a final bitter twist... This cynical thriller, which incorporates some *giallo*-typical sexual games and a murder scheme, benefits considerably from Aldo Crudo's razor-sharp storyline which revels in the psychological war being played by its main protagonists. The film is ably brought to the screen by Campanile, formerly a director of fluffy comedies, who uses close camerawork to make the viewer an unwilling participant in the marital and kidnap conflicts, contrasting the stifling atmosphere in the tourist's car with the open vistas of the Nevada desert. The maniacal, babbling hitch-hiker is played to the hilt by Hess, the king of scumbag villains, while Nero (previously another booze-soaked journo in **The Fifth Cord**) and Clery are both excellent as the couple who go from a marriage made in hell to an earthly nightmare. The image of Clery emerging naked from the caravan with a smoking rifle in her hand like an angel of vengeance is priceless. The downbeat ending is presaged by the opening shots of Walter lining up his wife in a rifle-sight. Morricone contributes simple, yet haunting, banjo and guitar melodies, and the use of a sickly sweet song as a perverse counterpoint to the violent on-screen images was repeated by Ruggero Deodato in **House on the Edge of the Park**, which also top-lined Hess.

Notes: The scene where Hess rapes Clery by a campfire was shot in two versions. In one version (Dutch and Japanese video releases) the fire hides much of the nudity which can be seen in the British (VTC), Danish, Finnish and Swedish versions. The brain-splattering image of the second cop being shot in the head is cut from the Finnish, Dutch, Japanese and Swedish videos.

Video:
 Australia: K-Tel/Filmways/VTC.
 Belgium and France: Hollywood Video - as **La proie de l'autostop**.
 Denmark: Video K; Video Action - both versions

uncut and letterboxed at 1.77:1 with sleeve : **Blafferen**.
 Finland: label unknown.
 Germany: VPS.
 Greece: Video Alsen - 93m, full screen, Greek subtitles as **Hitch-hike**.
 Holland: EVC - letterboxed as **Hitch-hike**
 Japan - label unknown - 102m: cut, letterboxed
 Poland: Video Rondo - approx. 94m as **Autostop**.
 Portugal: Domovideo - as **Autostop alucinate**.
 Sweden: Video Tape Center - cut, letterboxed at 1.77:1 as **Hitch-Hike**. Switzerland: Cinelux - Italian language.
 Venezuela: label unknown.
 UK: VTC - 99m 29s, scoped as **Hitch-Hike**; Renown - 99m 30s (although the '18' rated sleeve indicates that it is 93m), letterboxed at 1.66:1; Vidage - letterboxed, 93m: cut.

Laserdisc:
 Japan - label unknown - 102m: cut, letterboxed. The scene where the second cop is shot in the head is cut.

Soundtrack:
 Italy: CEM LP - nine tracks, limited edition of 500 copies.

HOT LIPS OF THE KILLER
Le calde labbra del carnefice ('The Hot Lips of the Executioner')
La muerte llama a las diez (Spain)
The Killer Wore Gloves (Greece: video re-title)
Satan's Last Supper (Germany)
 1974 Spain/Italy Technicolor 90m
 Production Company: P.E.A. (Produzioni Europee Associate) s.a.s. (Rome)/Producciones Cinematograficas Cine XX (Barcelona)
 Director: Juan Bosch
 Executive Producer: Alberto De Stefanis
 Story: based on the novel *Juan a las ocho, Pablo a las diez* by Luisa Maria Linares
 Cinematography: Julio Perez De Rozas
 Art Director and Costumes: Mario Ambrosino



Music: Marcello Giombini

Cast: Gillian Hills (*Peggy Foster*), Angel Del Pozo, Bruno Corazzari, Silvia Solar, Stelio Candelli (*Ronald James*), Orchidea De Santis (*Shirley*), Carlos Otero, Manuel Gas, Goyo Lebrero, Gabriel Agusti.

At Heathrow Airport, a man is razed to death in a toilet cubicle. A young woman, Peggy Foster, is concerned about the disappearance of Michael, her photographer boyfriend, who has been in Vietnam for months. In order to pay the rent, she reluctantly sub-lets her garret flat to a man called John Kirk Lawford. The new tenant wears sunglasses indoors and acts suspiciously. Peggy is lured to an abandoned airfield by a call from Michael but is shot at by a sniper. Back at her apartment block she is shocked to find that a man has apparently committed suicide by jumping from her balcony. While the police question Peggy, a stranger turns up and announces himself as John Kirk Lawford! Shirley, secretary to Peggy's lascivious publisher, is killed by a black-gloved intruder and the mystery deepens...

"What's going on here?" asks one of the red herrings in this particularly illogical thriller. In fact, everyone seems to know what's going on except the bewildered heroine (Gillian Hills, who was one of David Hemmings' playthings in **Blow-Up**) as she dutifully responds to her enigmatic boyfriend's coercion. But somehow the plot's not the important factor here: it's as if the mainly Spanish film-makers responsible for this *giallo* knew that no-one would take it seriously and decided to play with genre conventions. So as well as laughable dialogue we are treated to some comic characters. The satirical tone is personified by Mr. Lewis, a camp double-bass-playing neighbour (and red herring, of course), who is garrotted with one of the strings from his beloved instrument. Lewis is at loggerheads with the apartment block caretaker, who is also (surprise!) a suspect, particularly when he is seen wielding a sickle just after a victim has been murdered with one. As in other London-based thrillers, the film pays respect to most of the city's landmarks but, unlike Fulci's **A Lizard in a Woman's Skin**, fails to really capitalise on any particular locations (although there is a fatal incident at Piccadilly Circus Underground station). Even the climactic chase occurs in countryside which is clearly Spanish or Italian.

Video:

Germany: label unknown.

Greece: Master Home Video - 86m 30s, English language, Greek subtitles, with superimposed on-screen title **The Killer Wore Gloves** and sleeve title **Hot Lips of the Killer**.

THE HOUSE OF THE YELLOW CARPET

La casa del tappeto giallo

Der Gelbe Teppich (Germany 'The Yellow Carpet')

1983 Italy Eastmancolor 89m

Production Company: RPA - RAI2

Director: Carlo Lizzani

Producer: Filiberto Bandini

Story: Aldo Selleri based on a play *Teatro a Domicilio*

Screenplay: Lucio Battistrada, Filiberto Bandini

Cinematography: Giuliano Giustini

Editor: Angela Cipriani

Art Director: Elena Ricci Poccetto

Music: Stelvio Cipriani

Cast: Beatrice Romand (*Franca*), Erland

Josephson (*Achille Cimatti/the professor*),

Vittorio Mezzogiorno (*Antonio*), Milena Vukotic (*the psychiatrist*).

A young couple, Franca and Antonio, live in an apartment in an ultra-modern high-rise block. They have advertised an antique yellow carpet for sale but, just as a buyer is expected, Antonio is forced to leave the apartment because his car is being towed away. In his absence, a sinister man turns up apparently wanting to purchase the carpet. However, he soon confesses to being a wife murderer,



'In The Eye of The Hurricane'

recently released from prison, and sets about terrifying the young woman. He claims to be in cahoots with Antonio, who is jealous of his wife's feelings for Ernesto, her stepfather (the carpet was a wedding gift from him). She retaliates and stabs him to death. A woman turns up looking for her husband, an ex-actor, who is in the habit of calling at stranger's homes pretending to be bizarre characters. Franca denies having ever seen her attacker and persuades the woman to leave. However, she is shocked to find the blood-spattered man is still alive... This bizarre and claustrophobic psychological thriller is more like *The Apartment* With the Yellow Patterned Rug. Communist Carlo Lizzani (whose **Teenage Prostitution Racket** is an amazing slice of exploitative social realism) directs with an eye for detail and is not afraid to stint on the nastiness: the menacing stranger runs a razor-sharp knife across Franca's breast (or does he?) and, in a wince-inducing scene, inserts a hypodermic needle into his eyelid. But despite these brief jolts, the emphasis is on pulling the proverbial rug, er carpet from beneath the audience's feet. One minute the stranger and his haughty female accomplice represent a threat to Franca, the next they are shock therapists in collusion with her paranoid husband (surely he should be the one undergoing treatment?), and the next they are... oh well, better not spoil the ending. This is a tongue-in-cheek, needle-in-the-eye game which treats its female lead with little dignity (hey, it's Italian!) but if you're willing to accept a dose of strong black humour with your *giallo*, then you'll be able to stomach the eccentricities on offer here. Surprisingly, it was shown with slight cuts on British TV late one evening during the Eighties.

Video:

USA: Lightning Video - 85m 57s, full screen as **The House of the Yellow Carpet**.

THE IGUANA WITH A TONGUE OF FIRE

L'iguana dalla lingua di fuoco

L'iguane a la langue de feu (France)

La lengua de fuego de la iguana (Spain)

La iguana de la lengua de fuego (Venezuela video sleeve title)

Gli esorcisti ('The Exorcists' - Italian re-title? 1971 Italy/France/West Germany Eastmancolor Telecolor scope 94m

Production Company: Oceania (Rome)/Corona (Nanterre)/Terra Filmkunst (Munich)

Director: Willy Pareto [Riccardo Freda]

Story: based on the novel *A Room Without a Door* by Richard Mann

Screenplay: Willy Pareto [Riccardo Freda],

Alessandro Continenza, Gunther Ebert

Cinematographer: Silvano Ippoliti

Editors: Willy Pareto [Riccardo Freda] with Bruno Micheli

Music: Stelvio Cipriani

Cast: Anton Diffring (*Ambassador Sobieski*),

Valentina Cortese (*Madame Sobieski*), Luigi

Pistilli (*ex-Inspector John Norton*), Dagmar

Lassander (*Helene Sobieski*), Dominique

Boschero (*Ambassador Sobieski's mistress*),

Werner Pochat (*Marc Sobieski*) Arthur

O'Sullivan, Renato Romano (*Mandel, the chauffeur*),

Sergio Doria, Ruth Durley.

Uncredited Cast: Riccardo Freda (*sinister doctor*).

In Dublin, the acid-scarred, razor-slashed corpse of a young woman is discovered in the boot of the Swiss Ambassador's limousine. The Ambassador, his family and employees all become immediate suspects. Faced with the problem of diplomatic immunity, the police officer in charge of the case brings in John Norton an ex-Inspector known for his brutal methods, to carry out an 'unofficial' investigation. While

IN THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE

Jean Sorel Maurizio Bonuglia
Analia Godé Rossana Gianni
Tony Kendall



Norton develops a relationship with the Ambassador's attractive daughter, several more gruesome murders occur...

On the evidence of his awful **Estratto dagli archivi di polizia di una capitale Europea** and this opportunistic attempt to jump on the giallo bandwagon, Riccardo Freda's reputation as one of the gifted directors of Italian commercial cinema has to be called into question. **Iguana** is an unconvincing affair which, in an attempt to pack in as many red herrings as possible, even places the central detective figure under suspicion. True, there are many similarly fatuous films in the giallo canon but Freda's elevated status leaves one wondering why this is such a grubby-looking film and why the director telegraphs each revelation or violent incident with a breathtaking lack of subtlety worthy of Umberto Lenzi at his worst. Despite such reservations, the presence of Dagmar Lassander and Valentina Cortese provides this reptilian tale with a certain amount of agreeable feminine charm (although Dominique Boschero is shamefully under-used in a minor role). The best sequence shows Lassander, resplendent in a fedora hat and flapping black cloak, being chased by the razor-brandishing killer through foggy Dublin streets. Aside from the appeal of the atypical Irish setting (which unfortunately prompts an array of unconvincing dubbed Gaelic accents), what really distinguishes this thick stew from its contemporaries is the sheer nastiness of the murders: faces are scorched with acid, blood gushes from sliced throats and a flashback showcases walls decorated with brain matter. These dubious delights lead to an over-the-top climax which shows a

seemingly unstoppable transvestite slasher carrying out a frenzied attack on the inspector's half-naked teenage daughter while attempting to bash his elderly mother's brains out. As is the case with trash like **Giallo a Venezia** and **The New York Ripper**, such moments of mayhem elevate a second-rate giallo to pinnacles of cinematic bad taste which, although unsavoury, are an undeniable pleasure.

Video:

Greece: PVP Palace Video Productions - 91m 02s, full screen, Greek subtitles as **The Iguana with a Tongue of Fire**.

Italy: Magnum 3B - sex scenes between Pistilli and Lassander are apparently missing; AVO Film. Both releases as **L'iguana dalla lingua di fuoco**.

Venezuela: label unknown - cut: in Spanish as **La lengua de fuego de la iguana**; label unknown - uncut, in English with Spanish subtitles as **The Iguana with a Tongue of Fire**.

IN THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE

La volpe dalla coda di velluto ('The Fox with a Tail of Velvet')

El ojo del huracan (Spain 'The Eye of the Hurricane')

Suspicion (France)

Lusty Lovers (UK: theatrical title)

1971 Spain/Italy Eastmancolor 82m

Production Company: Orfeo (Madrid)/Arvo Film (Rome)

Director: José Maria Forque

Screenplay: Rafael Azcona, José Maria Forque, Mario Di Nardo, Francesco Campitelli
Cinematography: Giovanni Bergamini, Alejandro Ulloa
Editor: Mercedes Alonso
Art Director: Giorgio Marzelli
Music: Piero Piccioni
Assistant Directors: Roberto Amicucci, J. A. Arevalo
Cast: Analia Gade (*Ruth Dupré*), Jean Sorel (*Paul Cortell*), Rosanna Yanni (*Daniele*), Tony Kendall [Luciano Stella] (*Michel*), Maurizio Bonuglia (*Roland*), Julio Pena (*Pierre, the butler*), alsatian dog (*Bernard*).

Having agreed to a trial separation from her husband Michel, Ruth Dupré takes Paul, a handsome young man, for a sojourn at her luxury coastal villa. Paul's enigmatic friend Roland turns up. 'Accidents' begin to happen: the brakes on Ruth's sportscar 'fail' and her oxygen tanks are mysteriously empty when she goes deep sea diving. Ruth becomes increasingly paranoid, especially when Michel visits and she overhears him discussing a murder plot with Paul and 'another woman' called Daniele... This slick erotic thriller was filmed on the Cote D'Azur and comes across like a twisted advert - sun, sea, blue sky, deceit, murder and, of course, Martini. Basically, this is an extension of Umberto Lenzi's **Orgasmo/Paranoia** plot, except it's Analia Gade who plays the desperate, psychologically tortured rich woman role normally reserved for Carroll Baker. Despite the police inspector's assertion that "you shouldn't play cards with an old pack", Spanish director José Maria Forque deals a winning hand which is complemented by good performances from the cast, typically cool easy listening themes from Piero Piccioni and some garishly pleasing early Seventies fashions and interiors. In addition, there is a clichéd but well-executed sequence in which Ruth is nearly killed when her car brakes mysteriously fail (even Hitchcock showed how a similar scene can be ruined by the use of back projection in **Family Plot**). The twist ending is neatly anticipated by Michel's assertion that 'violence breeds violence'.

Video:

Holland: Standard - letterboxed, with Dutch subtitles as **In the Eye of the Hurricane**.

IN THE FOLDS OF THE FLESH

Nelle pieghe della carne

Las endemoniadas (Spain 'The Possessed')

Dans les replis de la chair (France 'In the Folds of the Flesh')

La folle (France: video re-title 'The Madness')

Felicity (Greece: video re-title)

Mansion sangriamente (Venezuela)

1970 Italy/Spain Eastmancolor 87m

Production Company: M.G.B. Cinematografica (Rome)/Talia Films (Madrid)

Director and Producer: Sergio Bergonzelli

Story: Fabio De Agostini, Mario [Mariano] Cajano

Screenplay: Fabio De Agostini, Sergio Bergonzelli

Cinematography: Mario Pacheco

Editor: Donatella Baglivo

Art Director: Eduardo Terre de la Fuego

Music: Jesus Villa Rojo

Assistant Directors: Fernando Merighi, Juan Ignacio Galvar Vilches

Cast: Eleonora Rossi Drago (*Lucille*), Anna Maria Pierangeli (*Esther/Falaise Gardere*), Fernando Sancho (*Pascal Gorriot*), Victor Alcazar (*Michel Bordelin*), Alfredo Mayo (*police inspector*), Emilio Gutierrez Caba (*Colin*), Mara Rosa Schlauba (*Elizabeth*), Giancarlo Sisti (*André*), Gaetano Imbro, Luciano Lorcas Catenacci (*Antoine*), Bruno Ciangola.

Pascal Gorriot, an escaped criminal, accidentally witnesses Lucille disposing of her second husband André's body at sea. Thirteen years later, André's cousin turns up at Lucille's villa with his Alsatian dog. It's not long before creepy Colin, André's son, strangles the unfortunate hound and Falaise, André's daughter



'In The Folds of the Flesh'

stabs their unwelcome family member to death. Another unwanted visitor friend arrives and rapidly seduces Falaise. Colin is jealous, and warns the Don Juan about the dangers of being a male praying mantis, and it's not long before Falaise decapitates him. Pascal, the ex-convict who witnessed the murder of André is the next intruder. He takes the family hostage and demands blackmail money, prompting them to do away with him in an acid bath. The police investigate and a chain of deception and murder is revealed...

Containing enough aberrant behaviour and neuroses to keep a conference of psychologists (and Film Studies lecturers!) busy for a week, **In the Folds of the Flesh** is a ridiculous, overwrought trash masterpiece. The truly incredible plot is so convoluted and bizarre it defies serious explanation. Not content with depicting the perverse antics of its unusual characters, the film even manages to drag in Etruscan skeletons, squawking vultures and flashbacks to a Nazi death camp. The kitschy interiors are a delight (the insane asylum is a particularly fabulous Pop Art creation) and it makes no difference that the multiple beheadings are painfully unconvincing (let's face it, even with all the advances in special effects, Tom Savini couldn't do much better years later for Argento's **Trauma**). In a film as wild as this, reality takes second place to acid-tinged artifice. Three future directors worked on this amazing titbit. Co-scripter, Fabio De Agostino, went on

to elaborate on the brief Nazi sleaze on show here with **The Red Nights of the Gestapo**; his co-writer was Mario Caiano, who used more Freudian theory to explain his **Eye in the Labyrinth**, while assistant director Ferdinando Merighi helmed another demented classic featuring a beheading, **The Bogeyman and the French Murders**.

Video:

France: Best-Seller Production/VRP - as **Dans les replis de la chair**.
Greece: VEP - 87m 17s as **In the Folds of the Flesh** with sleeve title **Felicity**.
Italy: Videogroup - letterboxed; Eureka - Both releases as **Nelle pieghe della carne**.
UK: Redemption - 87m 51s: uncut with a BBFC '18' certificate, letterboxed, good quality print as **In the Folds of the Flesh**, with a sleeve design which (cleverly) exploits the brief Nazi death camp flashback.
Venezuela: label unknown - uncut as **Mansion sangriamente**.

INTIMATE CRIMES

Delitti a luce rossa ('Crimes in a Red Light')
Crimes dans l'intimite (France 'Intimate Crimes')

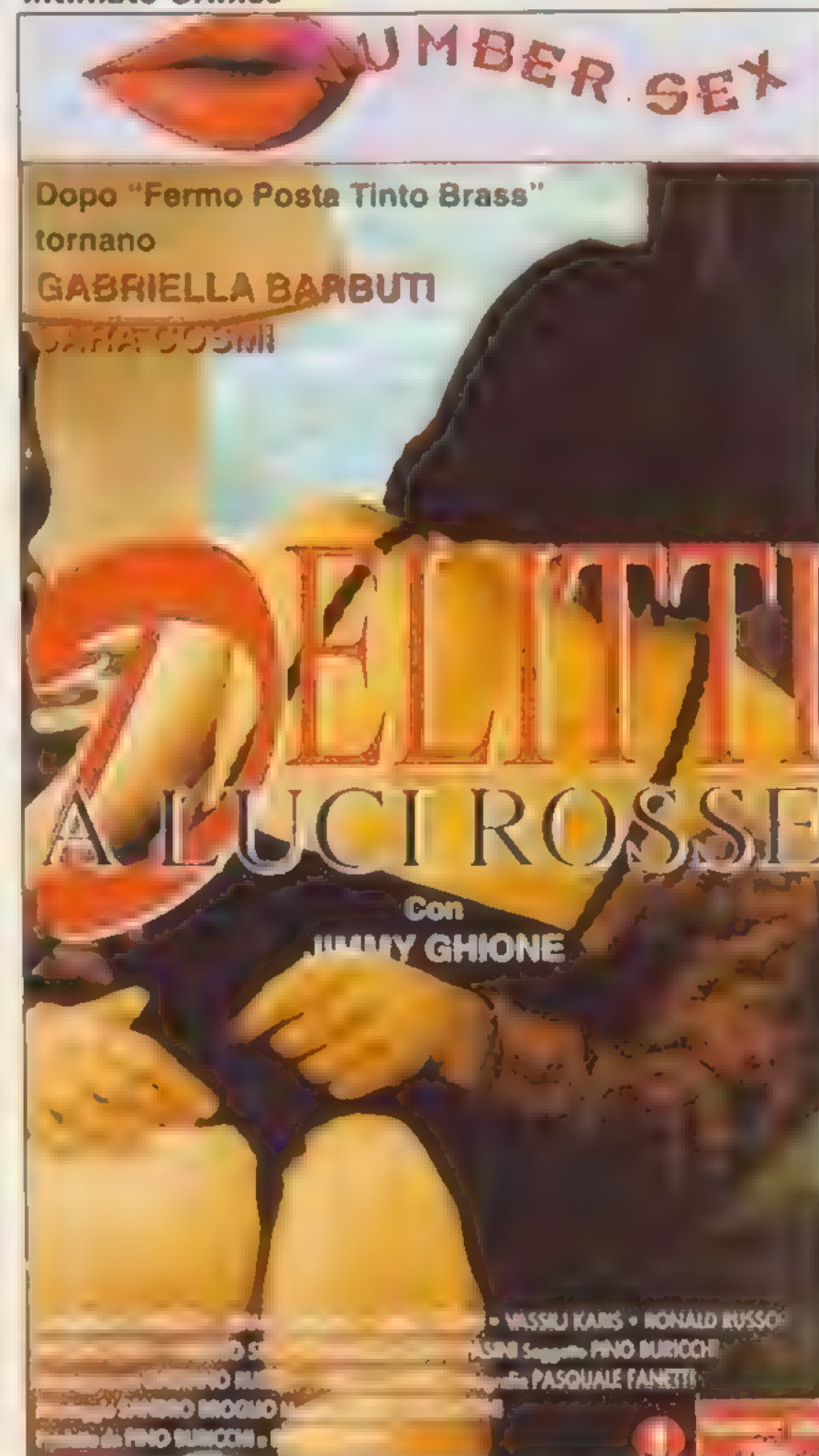
Intimes gestandnis (Germany 'Intimate Confessions')
1996 Italy Eastmancolor Kodak Augustus Color 86m

Production Company: New Way
Distribution/N.I.C. S.r.l.
Director: Emanuelle Glisenti [Pasquale Fanetti]
Producer: Pino Buricchi, Rino D'Anna
Story: Pino Buricchi
Screenplay: Gaetano Russo, Albert Barney [Pasquale Fanetti]
Cinematography: Pasquale Fanetti
Editor: Sandro Broglio
Music: Steve Costantini
Cast: Gabriella Barbuti (Claudia Ferrari), Jimmy Ghione (Joe Dupont), Vassili Karis [Karamesinis] (Paolo Henkel), Ronald Russo (Mimmo Rocchi), Maurice Poli (Carlo, a dock-side employee), Marco Seri, Emanuela Drudi Pasini, Sara Cosmi (Valeria).

Paolo Henkel, a middle-aged man, is married to Claudia Ferrari, the owner of a hotel. He wants to get rid of his wife so he can devote himself to Valeria, a self-adoring young bimbo. Claudia is attacked by a thug so Paolo employs Joe Dupont, a bodyguard, to protect her. In reality, Joe is a killer, callously hired to dispose of the woman he is supposedly protecting. However, he falls for Claudia and confesses the murder plot. She persuades him to kill her husband instead. Joe runs away but soon realises that he is deeply in love with Claudia. In the meantime, she marries Mimmo Rocchi, the manager of her hotel. Joe reappears and several twists follow...

Pasquale Fanetti, a former cinematographer for softcore specialists like Bruno Gaburro and Lorenzo Onorati, is one of the few Italian directors, along with Antonio Bonifacio, currently still making *gialli*. This film, and **Scandalous Liaisons** (also by Fanetti), have their roots in Italian genre cinema, but are an attempt to imitate the numerous Hollywood-produced erotic thrillers which litter the shelves of every video rental outlet. As such they are little more than excuses to display as much female flesh as the plot will allow. Aimed at the couples market, these movies titillate men and give women the satisfaction of allowing their partner to ogle other women because the nudity is apparently part of the story. Unfortunately, the constant necessity of bringing the narrative to a complete stand-still while the female cast cavort around naked soon becomes tiresome. A good example of this extraneous exhibitionism in **Intimate Crimes** is the four minute (it seems longer!) dance/strip which Sara Cosmi performs in a nightclub. This is bad enough but pneumatic Sara even re-appears for a further

Intimate Crimes





Italian video sleeve for 'The Killer Has Returned'

stint on the dance floor. If you can cope with such longeurs, this fluff is mildly diverting and contains at least one surprise twist. Welcome links with better times are provided by Vassili Karamesinis, who was a sleazeball in **Giallo a Venezia** and Maurice Poli, who was in **Five Dolls For An August Moon** and has the last word in **Intimate Crimes**.

Video:

Germany: label unknown - as **Intimes gesandnis**.

Italy: Number One Video/Number Sex - 83m 26s. letterboxed as **Delitti a luce rosse**.

THE KILLER HAS RETURNED

L'assassino e' ancora tra noi ('The Killer is Still Amongst Us')

Firenze - L'assassino e' ancora tra noi (video sleeve title)

1986 Italy Fuji Color Luciano Vittori 83m

Production Company: Orchidea Films S.r.l. (Rome)

Director: Camillo Teti

Story: Camillo Teti, Giuliano Carnimeo

Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi, Camillo Teti

Cinematography: Giuseppe Berardini

Art Director: Enrico Fiorentini

Special Effects: Roberto Pace

Assistant Director: Marina Paoletti

Cast: Mariangela D'Abbraccio (*Cristiana*),

Giovanni Visentin, Riccardo Perrotti, Luigi

Mezzanotte, Yvonne D'Abbraccio, Francesco

Capitano, Oreste Rotundo, Silvia D'Agostini,

Fabio Carfora, Franco Adducci, Marco Bertini,

Anna Pera, Giuseppe Pelli, M. Rosario Tizzano,

Roberto Sanna.

The outskirts of Florence: while making love in a car, a young couple are ritualistically butchered by a male figure. Cristiana, a criminology student, is composing her thesis on the unsolved murder. She is soon threatened by

anonymous calls, while her close friend and other people she comes into contact with are silenced forever. She begins to suspect everyone, even her boyfriend Alex. Believing that she may be psychic, Cristiana attends a seance and is shocked to 'see' the graphic murder and mutilation of another young couple. Still unsettled, she goes to a pre-arranged rendezvous with Alex at a cinema called The Hitchcock. A stranger - by implication the killer - sits down next to them. The film being screened is 'L'assassino e' ancora tra noi'!

This intense film is somewhat dubious 'entertainment' due to its factual basis - a real-life serial killer had been intermittently slaying couples in the hills surrounding Florence since the late Sixties and at the time when the film was made was still at large. To add authenticity, director Camillo Teti utilises a flat televisual style, with cold lighting and minimal use of music (it's a shame that Detto Mariano's unsettling score is not given greater prominence). Although we are clearly meant to be drawn into Cristiana's increasingly paranoid state of mind - in which everyone seems threatening, especially men - unfortunately, without the benefit of English dubbing, most non-Italian speakers will lose interest before the shocking seance sequence towards the film's conclusion. Having depicted the psychic 'vision' of a young couple's murder, Teti details the killer's grisly handiwork: the maniac cuts off the woman's nipples and then, in a scene on a par with **The Beast in Heat**'s lowlights, slices away her genitalia. Although this extreme imagery is comparable with the gratuitous violence in certain previous *gialli*, such as **The Crimes of the Black Cat**, **Giallo a Venezia** and **The New York Ripper**, it is more disturbing here because we know that this killer's hate is real. The film even has the gall to question what is reality and what is fantasy via its film-within-a-film conclusion.

Video:

Italy: Vivi Video - released as both an uncut 79m 35s version and a cut 78m 00s version. Both are full screen except for opening and closing credits.

Japan: label unknown - in English with Japanese subtitles as **The Killer Has Returned**.

THE KILLER IS ON THE PHONE

L'assassino... e' al telefono ('The Killer... is on the Telephone')

The Killer - Den Der Draeber (Denmark: 'The Killer - The One Who Kills')

Dernier appel (France: video title 'Last Call')

Ein mann geht auf's ganze (Germany 'A

UK video Sleeve for 'The Killer is on the Phone'





Spanish press-sheet for 'The Killer is on the Phone'

Man Goes For Everything')

El asesino... esta al telefono (Spain)

Scenes From a Murder (UK: video title)

The Final Curtain (UK: video re-title)

1972 Italy Eastmancolor colour LV (Luciano Vittori) Cinescope 102m

Production Company: Difnei Cinematografica (Rome)

Director: Alberto De Martino

Producers: Vittorio Bartattolo, Aldo Scavarda

Screenplay: Vincenzo Mannino, Adriano

Bolzoni, Renato Izzo, Alberto De Martino

Cinematography: Aristide Massaccesi

Editor: Otello Colangeli

Art Director and Set Decorator: Antonio Visone

Music and Music Director: Stelvio Cipriani

Assistant Director: Leo Lenoir [Leonardo Scavino]

Cast: Anne Heywood (*Eleanor Lorraine*), Telly Savalas (*Ranko*), Rossella Falk (*Margaret*), Giorgio Piazza (*George*), Osvaldo Ruggeri (*Thomas*), Antonio Guidi (*Chandler*), Willeke Von Ammlroy (*Dorothy*), Roger Von Hool, Leonardo Scavino (*killer*), Ada Pometti (*nurse*), Alessandro Perrella (*psychiatrist*).

Ever since her former husband Peter was murdered, Eleanor, an actress, has blanked out five years from her memory. She faints at the sight of a bald-headed man (subsequently identified as Ranko, professional killer). When she recovers, she cannot recognise her new husband George, nor remember what she had been told about Peter dying in a car crash. Peter's sister asks Eleanor's sister Dorothy to replace her in a play currently under rehearsal. Ranko mistakes Dorothy for Eleanor and kills her. Eleanor subsequently dreams of happy times with Peter which alternate with nightmares in which he is killed by Ranko. However, as she runs to tell George about her visions she sees him being murdered by the bald-headed killer. He pursues her back to the theatre...

A fairly routine outing filmed to no great effect in Ostend. The medieval architecture and canals of nearby Bruges, which have similar qualities to Venice, might perhaps have been a more atmospheric setting for this psychological thriller. It's a shame that Telly Savalas, who clearly turned up just for his pay cheque, is given little to do because he can portray a genuinely menacing figure (such as the psychopath in Robert Aldrich's *The Dirty Dozen* or the personification of evil in *Lisa and the Devil*). Rather than arousing sympathy, Anne Heywood's hysterical depiction of paranoid Eleanor merely tests the patience of the viewer - you wish Savalas would silence her for good. Cinematographer Aristide Massaccesi's scope compositions are difficult to appreciate in the ugly pan and scan video releases of the film which are generally in circulation. Stelvio Cipriani contributes a middling, but unmemorable, score in keeping with the rest of this production.

Video:

France: Reflex Video; Atlantic Video. Both as **Dernier appel**.

Holland: Telion - full screen.

Italy: Magnum 3B, AVO Film as **L'assassino... e' al telefono**.

UK: VCO - 84m 19s, full screen as **Scenes From a Murder**; DVS - 84m 16s, full screen, poor quality dark transfer as **The Final Curtain**.

THE KILLER NUN

Suor omicidi ('Sister Homicide')

La petite soeur du diable (Belgium, France 'The Devil's Little Sister')

La nonne qui tue (France 'The Nun Who Kills')

Gestandnis Einer Nonne (Germany 'Confessions of a Nun')

De Non die Doodt (Holland 'The Nun is Dead')

La monja homicida (Spain 'The Homicidal Nun')

Mord i Klostret (Sweden: video title 'Murder in the Cloisters')

Deadly Habit

1978 Italy Telecolor 86m

Production Company: Cinesud in collaboration with Gruppo di Lavoro Calliope

Director: Giulio Berruti

Producer: Enzo Gallo

Story: Enzo Gallo

Screenplay: Giulio Berruti, Alberto Tarallo

Cinematography: Tonino Maccoppi

Editor: Mario Giacco

Art Direction: Franco Vanorio

Music: Alessandro Alessandrini

Assistant Director: Alberto Vari

Cast: Anita Ekberg (*Sister Gertrude*), Alida Vali (*Mother Superior*), Massimo Serato (*Doctor Poirret*), Daniele Dublino, Lou Castel (*Pierre*), Joe Dallesandro (*Doctor Patrick Roland*), Alice Gherardi (*Baroness*), Laura Nucci, Lee De Barriault, Paola Morra (*Sister Mathieu*), Ileana Fraja, Antonietta Patricia, Sofia Lusy, Nerina Montagnini, Franco Caracciolo, Maria Sofia Amendolea, Chicca Thomas, Manlio Pierotti, Brunello Chiodetti, Enzo Spitaleri, Lesly Thomas, Aldo De Franchi.

In a French mental institution staffed by nuns, a killer is murdering the inmates. Suspicion falls upon Sister Gertrude who has become increasingly neurotic following her treatment for a brain tumour...

The Killer Nun dutifully wallows in sleaze, cruelty and murder whilst at the same time attempting to maintain a straight-faced, almost pious approach towards presentation. In fact, the film's trash aesthetic recalls Paul



ROSANNA SCHIAFFINO

R

el asesino ha reservado nueve butacas

EVA CEMERYS • LUCRETIA LOVE • PAOLA SENATORE • CHRIS AVRAM

ANDREA SCOTTI CON HOWARD ROSS Y EN JANET AGREN • GAETANO RUSSO •

DIRECCION POR GIUSEPPE BENNATI • MUSICA DE CARLO SAVINA • UNA PRODUCCION CINENOVE

Morrissey's cinema of 'bad taste', a connect or further emphasized by the casting of Warner prodigy (and 'non-actor') Joe Dallesandro as a doctor. Former diva Anita Ekberg gives a first-rate performance as the angst-ridden, increasingly paranoid Sister Gertrude, especially when she picks up a man for a sinful sex session. Massimo Serato (also in **The Bloodstained Shadow**) is amusing as a doctor exasperated by Sister Gertrude and the goings-on at the asylum. Left-wing actor Lou Castel also pops into the fray as a patient who might not be as mad as his fellow inmates and who ultimately suffers for his streak of sanity. When not delivering calm ecclesiastical accompaniment to the proceedings, Alessandro Alessandroni's score is pitched at a suitably hysterical level in keeping with the insanity on display. **The Killer Nun** is guaranteed to send devout Catholics into fits of apoplexy while delighting those of us who savour over-the-top immoral entertainment.

Video:

Australia: King of Video - 79m 57s: cut as **The Killer Nun**.

France: VIP - as **La petite soeur du Diable**.

Holland: Sunrise - as **The Killer Nun**; VMP - as **The Killer Nun**.

Sweden: Marianne Video - letterboxed, good picture quality

UK -Techno/Fletcher - 80m 55s, letterboxed as **The Killer Nun**; Redemption - 80m 38s: cut by 13 seconds (shots of a needle piercing an eyeball and a scalpel slicing skin), letterboxed as **The Killer Nun**.

THE KILLER RESERVED NINE SEATS

L'assassino ha riservato nove poltrone

El asesino ha reservado nueve butacas (Spain)

1974 Italy Eastmancolor 103m

Production Company: Cinenove

Director: Giuseppe Bennati

Executive Producer: Dario Rossini

Screenplay: Biagia Proietti, Paolo Levi

Giuseppe Bennati

Editor: Luciano Anconetani

Art Director: Vincenzo Eusepi

Music: Carlo Savina

Cast: Rossana Schiaffino (*Vivian*), Chris

Left: Spanish artwork for 'The Killer Reserved Nine Seats'

Below: The assembled victims in 'The Killer Reserved Nine Seats'



ROSANNA SCHIAFFINO

R

el asesino ha reservado nueve butacas

GIUSEPPE BENNATI



sea] Avram (Patrick Davenant), Eva Czemerys [Czemerys] (Rebecca), Lucretia Love Jones, Paola Senatore (Lynn), Gaetano Russo (Hamilton), Andrea Scotti (Albert, Vivian's husband), Edoardo Filippone (Duncan Foster), and Antonio Guerra, Howard Ross [Renato Rossi] (Russell), Janet Agren (Kim, Patrick's lover).

Patrick Davenant, a rich aristocrat, invites nine guests to a disused theatre where an entire family were previously killed under mysterious circumstances. One by one, the guests are murdered by a masked figure. Sexual jealousies and outright bitchiness provide the motivations for the obligatory red herring rogues. The violence culminates with the revelation that the actions of the ruthless killer were part of an unavoidable curse.

For another thriller which takes its inspiration from Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Indians*, but lacks the quota of sex and violence expected for the exploitation market. After a reasonably good start, nearly every female cast member dies all in the name of art, there are the inevitable lesbian gropings and the masked killer resorts to ever more brutal methods of murder. In one outrageous scene, he repeatedly rapes a female victim in the crotch before nailing one of her hands to a wooden post! Although the film is unconvincingly set in Italy, and, the theatrical backdrop is suitably potent and the proceedings are presented in a strongly stagey manner. The murders are unnecessarily bolstered by a supernatural element.

Video:

Greece: Video Movies - 95m 29s, full screen except for opening credits which are letterboxed, Greek subtitles as **The Killer Reserved Nine Seats**.

Italy: Mondial Video - (this might be a Swiss release); Cinehollywood - as **L'assassino ha riservato nove poltrone**.

KNIFE OF ICE

Il coltello di ghiaccio ('Knife of Ice')
Dietro del silenzio (Italy: alternate title? Behind the Silence')

Detras del silencio (Spain 'Behind the Silence')

The Ice-Pick

Silent Horror

Dagger of Ice (export sales title?)

1972 Italy/Spain Technicolor Techniscope

Production Company: Tritone Cinematografica (Rome)/Mundial Film (Madrid)

Director and Story: Umberto Lenzi

Screenplay: Umberto Lenzi, Antonio Troisio

Cinematography: José F. Aguayo

Editor: Enzo Alabiso

Music: Marcello Giombini

Assistant Director: Franco Fantasia

Cast: Carroll Baker (*Martha Cauldwell*), Alan Scott [Sergio Ciani], Evelyn Stewart [Ida Galli] (*Jenny Ascot*), Eduardo Fajardo (*Marcos, the chauffeur*), Sylvia Monelli (*Annie Britain, the housekeeper*), Jorge Rigaud (*Uncle Ralph*), Franco Fantasia (*Doctor Lauren*), Ida [Dada] Ballotti, Lorenzo Robledo, Mario Pardo, Olga Sherardi, Consalvo Dell'Arti, Carla Mancini, Rosa Maria Rodriguez (*Christina*).

Having been struck dumb at the age of twelve as a reaction to seeing the death of her parents in a railway accident, Martha Cauldwell communicates via tapping noises and mimes. She welcomes her cousin Jenny, a singer, to her foster family home in Martinique but their guest is soon killed. The police suspect that a sex killer is on the loose because a teenage girl was found dead several hours before. A hippie, branded a drug-crazed Satanist by the locals, is the main suspect. Soon after, the family housekeeper and a young girl are also murdered but the hippie, still in custody, is proven to be innocent. So the real killer is still at large...

Fear is a knife of ice which (sic) penetrates the



'Knife of Ice'

senses down to the depth of conscience'. A sloppily presented quote from Poe sets the tone for this sub-Hitchcockian thriller which also includes nods to **The Spiral Staircase** and, in a coincidence with the same year's **Don't Torture a Duckling**, shows a child playing with a Donald Duck toy. Lenzi's preoccupation (obsession?) with Carroll Baker continues, only this time she gets to play a (slightly annoying) twitchy mute. Aside from the rather too obvious Satanist hippie, the film presents a shoal of suspects including the creepy chauffeur, a shifty housekeeper, the smarmy family doctor, an overbearing young girl and an uncle with an interest in witchcraft. After a number of unlikely occurrences, such as the suddenly-appearing fog banks which seem to be rehearsing for a role in a John Carpenter film, the proceedings are brought to another highly-improbable *giallo* conclusion. On the way, the director emphasises every minor incident with the subtlety of a bull in a china shop, zooming into actors' eyes and Satanic symbols with alarming regularity (making a film like **Five Dolls** seem positively restrained in comparison). And speaking of bulls, most civilised viewers will want to avoid the bullfight footage which is used to provide some flimsy psychological background for Baker's character. Marcello Giombini, one of Italy's worst composers, attempts to ape other *gialli* scores by the use of

female vocals, but beneath these appealing chords he mixes in an unpleasant electronic dirge more akin to his usual efforts. Despite these weaknesses, this is a well-paced, enjoyably superficial affair which exuberantly revels in the lunacy commonplace in the genre. Unfortunately, after reasonably inspired entries like **So Sweet, So Perverse** and **Paranoia**, it's a shame to see Lenzi and his team resorting to such daftness. His next *gialli*, **Wide-Eyed in the Dark** and **Spasmo**, were even more inane but somehow deliver moments of madness superior to those in **Knife of Ice**.

Video:

Greece: Master - full screen, English language, Greek subtitles from a washed out grainy print as **Knife of Ice**. The opening credits appear against a plain black background, masking out footage of a bullfight.

THE LADY IN RED KILLS SEVEN TIMES

La dama rossa uccide sette volte
La dame en rouge tua sept fois (France 'The Red Queen Kills Seven Times')

Horror House (Germany: video re-title)

La dama rosa mata siete veces (Spain 'The Red Queen Kills Seven Times')



'The Lady in Red Kills Seven Times'

The Red Queen Kills Seven Times (USA)
Blood Feast (USA; alternate theatrical title)
Feast of Flesh (USA; alternate theatrical title)
The Corpse Which Didn't Want to Die (?)
 1972 Italy/West Germany Technicolor scope 98m
 Production Company: Phoenix Cinematografica (Rome)/Romano Film G.m.b.H. (Munich)/Trainan Boeru (Munich)
 Director: Emilio P. Miraglia
 Story: Fabio Pittorru
 Screenplay: Emilio P. Miraglia, Fabio Pittorru
 Cinematography: Alberto Spagnoli
 Editor: Romeo Ciatti
 Art Director: Lorenzo Baraldi
 Music and Music Director: Bruno Nicolai
 Cast: Barbara Bouchet (*Kitty Wildenbruck*), Ugo Pagliai (*Martin Hoffman*), Marina Malfatti (*Franziska Wildenbruck*), Marino Mase' (*police inspector*), Maria Pia Giancaro (*Elisabeth Hoffman*), Fabrizio Moresco, Sybil Danning (*Lulu Palm*), Nino Korda, Rudolph Schindler, Maria Antonietta Guido, Carla Mancini, Bruno Bertocci.

1958, an ancient castle in Germany: two young girls, Kitty and Franziska, are told about the curse of the 'Red Queen', an entity who kills seven victims every hundred years. 1972: a red-cloaked figure stalks the castle and causes the girls' grandfather to die of fright. Hans Meyer, the kinky general manager of the Springe Fashion company (where Kitty works) is killed in a park full of prostitutes. It appears that the Red Queen has returned from the dead when employees and models working for the fashion company start being killed one by one... This is an object reminder that you should never judge a film by an inferior video release. Having previously seen *The Red Queen* stalking her victims in a second generation copy of a terrible quality Greek video, it was a revelation to re-view the film in a crystal clear German version. What a difference! Alberto Spagnoli's cinematography exudes a real gloss and is particularly effective during a nightmarish dream sequence in which Barbara Bouchet is terrorised and tortured by a red-clad apparition. Moreover, the gory moments - Bouchet's hand being stabbed, Giancaro's head being impaled on a spiked fence - are at least discernible. Bruno Nicolai's score is clearly audible and without the jumps and glitches on the Greek tape proves to be an easy listening delight. The weak link is earnest-looking Ugo

Pagliai who proves to be an uninspiring male lead and gets to wear some shamefully tasteless sports jackets.

Video:

Germany: American Video - 78m 19s (violence intact), letterboxed, excellent quality print, German language as *La dama rossa uccide sette volte* with the title *Horror House* added beforehand. However, the pre-credits explanation of the curse is missing!
 Greece: Video Cronus - 89m 44s, slightly letterboxed, scenes missing due to print jumps, dark transfer from a washed out, jumpy print as *The Lady in Red Kills Seven Times*.
 Italy: Creazioni Home Video - 94m 47s, full screen as *La dama rossa uccide sette volte*.

LIBIDO

1965 Italy black and white Technostampa scope 101m
 Production Company: Nucleo Film

Director: Julian Berry Storff [Ernesto Gastaldi]
 Producer: Ernesto Gastaldi
 Story: Mara Maryl [Maria Chianetta]
 Screenplay: Julian Berry [Ernesto Gastaldi], Victor Storff [Vittorio Salerno]
 Cinematography: Ramon Garron [Romolo Garroni]
 Editor: George Money
 Music: Carlo Rustichelli
 Cast: Dominique Boschero (*Helene*), Mara Maryl [Maria Chianetta] (*Brigitte*), Giancarlo Giannini (*Christian*), Alan Collins [Luciano Pigozzi] (*Paul*).

A boy, Christian, sees his father murder his mistress in a mirror-lined room. Years later, he returns to the family home with Helene, his fiancée, and another married couple who are close friends, Paul (his lawyer) and Brigitte. Christian is haunted by the idea that his father who supposedly committed suicide by throwing himself from a cliff - may still be alive.



LIBIDO

CON

DOMINIQUE BOSCHERO • MARA MARYL
 JOHN CHARLIE JOHNS
 ALAN COLLINS
 regia • JULIAN BERRY STORFF

Due produzioni NUCLEOFILM - Roma, realizzate da ERNESTO GASTALDI • VITTORIO SALERNO



Strange occurrences, such as finding his father's still smoking pipe, lead him to suspect that Paul is trying to gain his inheritance, however...

Adapted from an idea by Mara Maryl (Gastaldi's wife), this hastily shot thriller (which the writer-director claims was made in just eighteen days as a bet!) includes elements of **Les Diaboliques** and Roger Corman's **Pit and the Pendulum**, while using Freud's 'primal scene' theory (see introduction for details) as a pivotal basis for the story. Despite the inevitable constraints of the budget, **Libido** looks refreshingly sharp due to some impressive black and white photography and some great locations. Moreover, the mirror-lined room where the sex and violence occurs is a pleasing focal point for the protagonist's preoccupations - reflecting back his own voyeuristic obsessions in myriad ways. The film also benefits from the performances of a small but competent cast, which includes regular faces such as Luciano Pigozzi (**Blood and Black Lace**, **The Young, the Evil and the Savage**, and many others) and Dominique Boschero (**The Iguana with the Tongue of Fire**). Maria Chianetta's bubbly, flirtatious role initially offsets the developing psycho-drama and she adds none-too-serious sex appeal by wearing a bikini adorned with smiling pussycats and performing a tantalising strip for Pigozzi. Future 'method' actor Giannini looks suitably angst-ridden as the young man tormented by his father's past misdemeanours (he was also a detective-threatened-by-the-killer in **The Black Belly of the Tarantula**). Gastaldi and Salerno later re-used (tinted) scenes from **Libido** to provide flashbacks for the horror-themed no-budgeter **Notturmo con grida** (1982).

A LIZARD IN A WOMAN'S SKIN

Una lucertola con la pelle di donna

Carole (France: theatrical release)

Le venin de la peur (France: video title 'The Venom of Fear')

Les salopes vont en enfer (France: video re-title 'The Sluts Go To Hell')

Femme serpent (France: video re-title 'Female Serpent')

Una lagartija con piel de mujer (Spain)

Uma lagartixa com pele de mulher (Portugal)

Schizoid (USA)

1971 Italy/France/Spain Technicolor scope 105m

Production Company: Fida

Cinematografica/International Apollo Film

(Rome)/Les Films Corona (Paris)/Atlantida Film (Madrid)

Director: Lucio Fulci

Producer: Edmondo Amati

Story: Lucio Fulci, Roberto Gianviti

Screenplay: Lucio Fulci, Roberto Gianviti, Jose

Luis Martinez Molla, André Tranché

Cinematography: Luigi Kuveiller

Editor: Giorgio [Jorge] Serratonga

Art Director and Costumes: Maurizio Chiari

Music: Ennio Morricone

Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Special Effects: Carlo Rambaldi

Assistant Director: Giorgio Gentili

Cast: Florinda Bolkan (*Carol Hammond*), Jean

Sorel (*Frank Hammond*), Stanley Baker

(*Inspector Corvin*), Leo Genn (*Edmond*

Brighton), Silvia Monti (*Deborah, Frank's lover*),

Anita Strindberg (*Julia Durer*), George [Jorge]

Rigaud (*Doctor Kerr*), Alberto De Mendoza

(*Sergeant Brandon*), Penny Brown (*Jenny*),

Mike Kennedy (*Hubert, a hippie*), Edy Gall

[Edda Galleani] (*Joan Hammond*), Franco

Balducci (*McKenna, a policeman*), Ezio Marano

[Lowell, 'Scientific Squad'], Ersi Pond [Ezra

Paal] (*Mrs Gordon*), Gaetano Imbro

[policeman], Luigi Antonio Guerra (*policeman*).

Uncredited Cast: Jean Degrade (*St Paul's Clinic* director)

Carol Hammond, a rich socialite, tells her psychiatrist about a recurring nightmare in which she stabs Julia Durer, her noisy neighbour, to



Nice artwork, shame about the film! 'Love and Death'

death. The following day Julia is found dead, having been knifed in the same manner. The police arrest Carol when some of her belongings are found near the corpse. Her father, an eminent lawyer, bases her defence on the psychiatrist's testimony. She is released but is soon menaced by a hippie who also featured in her nightmare. Joan, Carol's stepdaughter, attempts to locate a possible witness and is subsequently found with her throat slashed. The hippie is arrested, confesses to Joan's murder but denies killing Julia Durer, as at the time he was out of his head on acid. Carol's father admits that a woman has been trying to blackmail him and then commits suicide, leaving a note confessing to Julia's murder. However, Inspector Corvin suspects that the real killer is still at large...

Despite, or perhaps because of its contrived

pseudo-psychological plot **Lizard in a Woman's Skin** is a quintessential *giallo*. It contains many of the genre's usual ingredients: murder, intrigue, blackmail, red herrings, and some fairly dogged detective work. But Fulci also incorporates some atypically fantastical horror elements which elevate the film into a nightmarish vision of neurosis: there are psychedelic dream sequences (the briefly glimpsed white swan is a real eye-opener), the gratuitous and rightly infamous (fake) dog experimentation scene (missing from most versions), and a fairly effective bat attack. These overtly horrific images, combined with Luigi **Deep Red** Kuveiller's expressive compositions and roving camerawork, some really effective editing, another choice Morricone score - which combines disturbing themes with ravishing vocals by Edda Dell Orso - plus opportunistic use of

London locations (particularly the then-disused Alexandra Palace), make this a lizard definitely worth catching.

Video:

Belgium/France: Hollywood Video - 95m 28s, letterboxed as **La venin de la peur**. The lesbian encounter between Bolkan and Strindberg is shorter than the UK VIP release, as a result of a different edit rather than cuts.

Greece: VIP - cut.

Holland: label unknown.

Italy: Mitel - uncut, fullscreen; Number One Video - cut by almost eight minutes. Both as **Una lucertola con la pelle di donna**.

Portugal: Filmital - with sleeve title **Uma lagartixa com Pele de Mulher**.

UK: VIP - 94m 09s: cut (although includes longer lesbian scene) as **A Lizard in a Woman's Skin**.

Soundtrack:

Germany: Colosseum Schallplatten CD - *mondo morricone*: title theme on this excellent compilation.

Italy: Beat CD - *Lucio Fulci's Horror and Thriller*: four themes (nearly 20 minutes) on this excellent compilation; Screen Trax/Fantafestival CD: over 60 minutes with several previously unreleased themes.

LOVE AND DEATH ON THE EDGE OF A RAZOR

Giorni d'amore sul filo di una lama ('Days of Love on the Edge of a Blade')

Chasse-croise sur une lame de rasoir

France: theatrical title 'Cross-Chase on a Razor Blade')

Sur le fil du rasoir (France 'On the Edge of a Razor')

Meurtre au rasoir (France: video re-title 'Death by Razor')

1973 Italy Eastmancolor scope 93m

Production Company: Attias Cinematografica

Director: M. Mollin [Giuseppe Pellegrini]

Story: Camillo Fantacci

Screenplay: Dante Cesaretti, Giuseppe Pellegrini

Cinematography: Mario Vitale

Editor: Enzo Alabiso

Music: Gianfranco and Felice Di Stefano

Assistant Director: Dante Cesaretti

Cast: Peter Lee Lawrence [Karl Hirenbach]

Stefano Bruni, Erika Blank [sic - Erika Bianchi Colombato] (*Lidia Caselli*), Ivana Novak, Enzo Loggisci, Fausto Del Chicca, Ubaldo Pasqualetti,

Vanna Castellani, Silvano Tranquilli, Pietro Torrisi, Carlo Papi, Orazio Stracuzzi, Fabio Garriba, Giorgio De Lullo.

Stefano Bruni, son of a rich industrialist, meets Lidia in Venice and immediately falls in love. Unfortunately, he soon loses his beloved in a road accident. Persuaded by his father, he begins a relationship with Giovanna, but continues to long for his lost love. Then one day he meets a journalist who looks identical to Lidia...

Love and Death... introduces its **Love** interest with a fifteen minute, vomit-inducing romantic passage through appealing but clichéd Italian tourist traps (Venice, Florence, Pisa). It's something of a relief when **Death** rears its head by way of an undramatic newspaper headline informing the starry-eyed hero that his darling has expired in a road accident. Unfortunately, while he drowns his sorrows we are treated to yet more soft focus travelogue romance by way of flashbacks. This crime thriller/*giallo* has a story based around a Mafia blackmail plot but fails to excite. Leading man Karl Hirenbach committed suicide shortly after this film, presumably having realised his career was going nowhere.

Video:

France: Metropole Home Video - 90m 19s, full screen with sleeve title **Meurtre au rasoir**; label unknown - as **Meurtre au rasoir** with sleeve artwork of Klaus Kinski in **Le orme**

MADHOUSE

There Was a Little Girl (original title on prints)

Hullujenhuone (Finland: video sleeve title)

Party des Schreckens (Germany 'Party of the Scared')

I Will Scare You To Death (alternate title?)

Scared To Death (shooting title)

1981 USA/Italy Technicolor Technovision

Dolby stereo 93m

Production Company: Chesham

Director: Ovidio G. Assonitis

Producer: Ovidio G. Assonitis, Peter Shepherd

Screenplay: Stephen Blakley, Ovidio G.

Assonitis, Peter Shepherd, Robert Gandus

Cinematography: Roberto D'Ettore Piazzoli

Editor: Angelo Curi

Art Director: Stefano Paltinieri

Music and Music Director: Riz Ortolani

Cast: Trish Everly (*Julia*), Michael Macrae

(*Sam*), Dennis Robertson (*Father James*),

Morgan Hart (*Helen*), Jerry Fujikawa (*Kimura*),

Allison Biggers (*Mary*), Edith Ivey (*Amantha Boregard, the landlady*), Don Devendorf (*school principal*), Huxsie Scott (*secretary*), Richard

Baker (*Sacha Robertson Jr.*), Doug Dillingham

(*Golden*), Janie Baker (*Sacha's mother*), Joe

Camp (*hospital nightwatchman*).

Julie, a teacher of deaf children, is traumatized by Mary, the twin who used to torment her when they were children. Driven mad because

she had to share a birthday with her sister Mary has suffered a disfiguring skin disease in an asylum. A hospital nightwatchman's car is torn out by a large dog and Mary, Julie's favourite pupil and her best friend, is also savaged to death by the dog. It would seem that Mary is responsible for the deaths, but she is not the one orchestrating the violence...

Despite its Italian connections and crew, this uninspiring 'Video Nasty' has an American feel and comes across like a TV movie with gratuitous violence. Although it contains some pleasantly lurid scenes, such as a woman being torn apart by a vicious dog, a frenzied mutilation and the notorious power drill through the dog's head (it's clearly a fake canine), they seem out of place. The film's other drawback is that once the killer is revealed, he/she comes across as a pathetic figure rather than a homicidal maniac. Riz Ortolani's aural contribution is a low-rent amalgam of synthesiser sounds which proves to be merely irritating.

Video:

Denmark: Nordisk/Polygram - cut (a dog bite is missing) as **Madhouse**.

Finland: Castle Video - 86m 56s, full screen, in English with Finnish subtitles.

Germany: VCL - as both **Party des Schreckens** and **Madhouse**.

Holland/Belgium: label unknown - 86m 57s: cut full screen, in English as **Madhouse**.





UK: Medusa - 89m 18s, full screen except for opening credits as **Madhouse**.
USA: VCL/Media Home Entertainment - unrated as **Madhouse**.

LA MORTE SCENDE LEGGERA

('Death Falls Lightly')

La muerte descende ligera (Spain)

1972 Italy Telecolor Eastmancolor scope 88m

Production Company: Agata Film

Director: Leopoldo Savona

Story: Luigi Russo

Screenplay: Luigi Russo, Leopoldo Savona

Cinematography: Luciano Trassatti

Editor: Otello Colangeli

Art Director: Ditta Alfredo D'Angelo

Music: Lallo [Coriolano] Gori

Assistant Director: Luigi Russo

Cast: Stelio Candelli (*George Darica*), Patrizia Viotti (*Carla*), Veronika Korosec, Rossella Bergamonti, Tom Felleghy [Tomasso Felleghi], Antonio Anelli, Marcello Di Martire, Mathily Doria, Fernando Cerulli (*Massimo Ogenisse*), Franco Marletta, Lela Cattaneo, Alessandro Perrella, Carla Mancini.

George Darica, a criminal, finds his wife dead with her throat slit open. Upon the advice of a shady lawyer, George decides to disappear for a while. Accompanied by his mistress Carla, he hides out in a disused hotel. At first the couple seem content to lie around and have sex, but the confined atmosphere soon causes tensions. Meanwhile, the lawyer organises a charade. George discovers the body of a woman with a throat wound and a stranger persuades him to help bury the corpse. He soon witnesses further murders and, just as he starts to believe he is going mad, all is explained...

This is a languid *giallo* in which even the murders fail to excite. The production has the unfortunate ambience of Jesus Franco's early Seventies efforts, particularly as much of it takes place in the minimal surroundings of an hotel. As is the case with that erratic Spanish director's works, there is a fair amount of female nudity but the violent acts in **La morte scende leggera** all occur off-screen, with only the consequences shown. Lallo Gori's score sounds like it has been re-used from a Spaghetti Western, whilst an awful Hendrix-inspired rock song, '*Sunday in Neon Lights*', by the farcically named Mak Sigis Porter Ensemble, opens and closes the undramatic proceedings. Assistant director and co-scripter Luigi Russo later contributed the miserable **Dangerous Women** and seems more suited to erotic subject matter.

Video:

Italy: Futurama; Dolly Home Video - 85m 10s, letterboxed. Both as **La morte scende leggera**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Rifi single with two tracks.

IL MOSTRO

('The Monster')

Criminal (Belgium video re-title)

Criminalia (France and Belgium: video sleeve re-title)

1977 Italy Technospes 105m

Production Company: Alex Cinematografica

S.r.l./UTI Produzioni Associates S.r.l./S.G.M.

Film S.r.l.

Director: Luigi Zampa

Producer: Ugo Tucci, Claudio Mancini

Story and Screenplay: Sergio Donati

Cinematography: Mario Vulpiani

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Art Direction and Set Design: Dante Ferretti,

Enrico Fiorentini

Music and Music Direction: Ennio Morricone

Cast: Johnny Dorelli (*Valerio Barigozzi*), Sydne Rome (*Dina, the singer*), Renzo Palmer (*Baruffi*), Yves Beneyton (*Giorgio*), Enzo Santaniello (*Luca, Valerio's son*), Henning Schluter (*Nicola Mesca, editor*), Renato Scarpa (*Livaghi*), Gianrico Tedeschi (*Vittorio Santi alias Nonno Gustavo*), Orazio Orlando (*Inspector Pisani*), Angelica Ippolito (*Anna, Valerio's ex-wife*), Carlo Reali, Clara Colosimo, Giuseppe Terranova.

Valerio, a journalist, receives a message from a mysterious figure called 'Il mostro'. The note warns that Grandfather Gustav, a popular children's television presenter, is about to be killed. Valerio dashes over to the TV studio but finds the old man dying from a head wound. A famous football player is the next victim, followed by Valerio's boss and a female singer. Valerio is the main suspect because he is found at the scene of each crime...

You might experience a sense of déjà-vu when watching the opening shots of this parodic *giallo* because the gory murder of a young woman by a ski-masked killer is from **Death Walks in High-Heels**. The scene is revealed to be a cine-



ma showing of that film attended by the protagonist and his son (posters adorning the cinema foyer include **Spasmo**, **Carrie** and the cop thriller **La banda del trucidato**). Ex-crooner Johnny Dorelli delivers a surprisingly good performance as a journalist who is keen to exploit the murders for their newsworthy value, yet compelled to catch the culprit because he is the main suspect. Paradoxically, although the killer is one of the least likely suspects in *giallo* cinema, his/her identity is not difficult to guess. Morricone's score is uncharacteristically awful and there is a cameo appearance by Salvatore Baccaro in a shot from **The Beast in Heat**!

Video:

Belgium: label unknown - 95m 08s, letterboxed with a video generated title as **Criminal** and sleeve title **Criminalia**.

Italy: Number One Video/Video Graffiti - as **Il mostro**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Beat CD - on a double-bill with themes from **Il perfetto di ferro**.

...IL MOSTRO DI FIRENZE

(The Monster of Florence')

El asesino de Florencia (Spain 'The Killer of Florence')

1985 Italy colour 100m

Production Company: G.M.P. Gruppo Milano Produzioni

Director: Cesare Ferrario

Producer: Mario Giacomini, Bruno Noris

Story: loosely based on the book *'Il mostro di Firenze'* by Mario Spezi

Screenplay: Cesare Ferrario, Fulvio Ricciardi

Cinematography: Claudio Cirillo

Art Director and Costumes: Mario Ambrosino

Music: Paolo Rustichelli

Assistant Director: Fabio Jephcott

Cast: Leonard Mann (Leonardo Manzella)

Andreas Ackerman), Bettina Giovannini

(Giulia), Gabriele Tinti, Francesca Muzio,

Federico Pacifici, Alberto Di Stasio, Anna Orso,

Adia Mancinelli, Antonio Ballerio, Gianfranco

Baroni, Vittorio Capobianco, Giuseppe Mauro

Truciano, Stefania Dadda, Carole Le Pers,

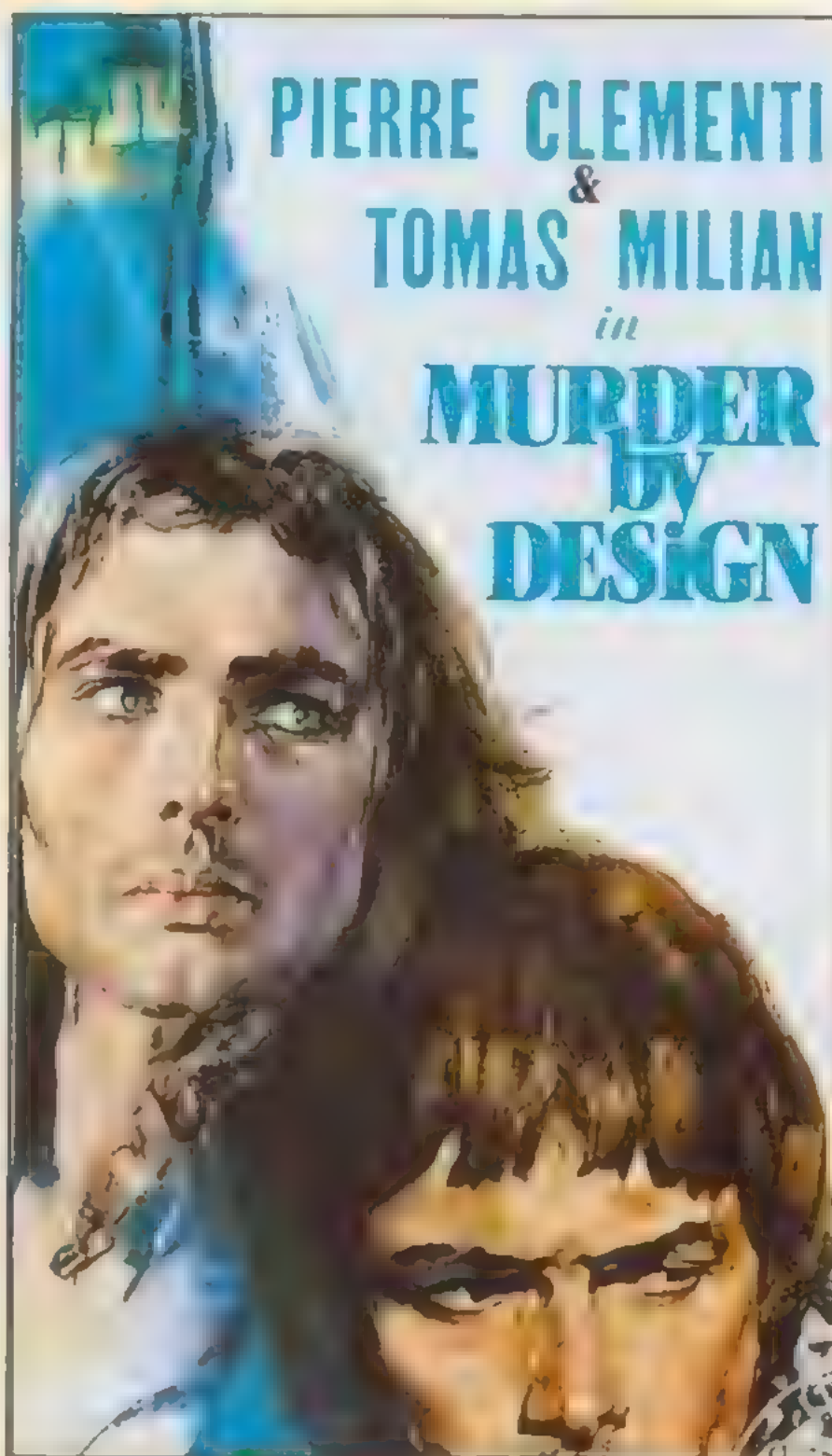
Agatino Magri, Cristina Masi, Piero Pugnolini,

Edina Riccardi, Bruno Santini, Maurizio

Scattorin, Alessandro Testa.

Tuscany: Giulia, a journalist, and Andreas, her enter boyfriend, are attempting to discover the identity of the so-called 'Monster of Florence' by reconstructing and studying a series of unsolved murders, in which couples are the victims, going back to 1968. The first murder was initially written off as a crime of passion but detailed analysis reveals that there may have been more than one individual involved. Andreas tries to complete a psychological portrait of the killer and eventually arrives at a hypothesis. A child sees his mother having sex with another man while his father looks on. This causes him to resent couples having sex in later life and triggers an uncontrollable desire to kill. Andreas imagines 'Il mostro' being put on trial. By the end, he thinks he has identified the killer...

This film, based on real-life killings, prompted (understandable) anger from the parents of the victims and the magistrates court in Florence attempted to have it boycotted (God knows what they thought of the outrageous **The Killer Has Returned**, which covers the same crimes). Ferrario's film, and presumably the book upon which it is 'loosely' based, utilise Freud's theory of unresolved aggression arising from a childhood experience to explain the killer's motive. This is hardly ground-breaking stuff in view of how many *gialli* had already explored this notion. The film tries to add authenticity to its docu-drama approach by having no credits at the start whilst Paolo Rustichelli, son of Carlo, contributes a sombre orchestral score which comes as a welcome change to the synth tripe churned out by his contemporaries. Leonard Mann, who was also in **Death Steps in the Dark** and **Order of Death**, seems as unsure about his role as the



writer-detective he plays is unsure about the killer's identity.

Video:

Italy: Capitol International Video - 90m 36s cut?, letterboxed as **Il mostro di Firenze**.

Spain: label unknown - uncut.

MURDER BY DESIGN

La vittima designata

Staende Skal Du Do (Denmark 'You Must Die Standing')

La victime designée (France 'The Designated Victim')

Der Todes-Engel (Germany 'The Angel of Death')

The Designated Murder (English language export title?)

Slam Out (foreign sales title)

The Designated Victim (?)

1971 Italy Technicolor Techniscope 105m

Production Company: P.C.E. Produzione

Cinematografiche Europee (Rome)

Director: Maurizio Lucidi

Producer: Vico Pavoni

Story: Augusto Caminito, Aldo Lado, Maurizio

Lucidi, Antonio Troisio

Screenplay: Fulvio Gicca

Screenplay Assistants: Fabio Carpi, Luigi

Malerba

Cinematography: Aldo Tonti

Editor: Alessandro Lucidi

Art Director and Costumes: Enrico Sabbatini

Music: Luis Enriquez Bacalov with the New

Trolls

Assistant Directors: Angelo Zemella, Aldo Lado,

Nello Vanin

Cast: Tomas Milian (*Stefano Argenti*), Pierre

Clementi (*Count Mateo Tiepolo*), Katia Christine

(*Fabienne Belanger*), Luigi Casellato, Marisa

Bartoli (*Luisa, Stefano's wife*), Ottavio Alessi

(*Inspector Finzi*), Sandra Cardini, Enzo Tarascio

(*Argenti's business associate*), Carla Mancini,

Bruno Boschetti.

Stefano Argenti, an ambitious advertising executive, meets a curious hippie named Count Mateo Tiepolo and they form a strange bond. Having gained Stefano's confidence, Tiepolo reveals that he wants to kill his domineering brother. He suggests that Stefano carry out the killing, and in exchange he offers to murder Luisa, Stefano's wife, who is a barrier to his career and his affair with Fabienne, a model. Argenti is more curious than shocked but decides to reject the bizarre offer. However, a short-time later, his wife is strangled to death

by an intruder and he becomes the prime suspect. By withholding evidence that could clear his innocence, Mateo blackmails Stefano into keeping his part of the bargain. But there's a twist...

This superior offering begins promisingly with a nude photo-shoot, but exploitation is not on the agenda. Based upon a 'perfect crime' scenario clearly derived from Hitchcock's **Strangers on a Train**, this tragic tale explores ideas about predestination and the ultimate act of sado-masochism. Without revealing too much, there is a clear suggestion that the strange game being played-out is unavoidable fate taking its course. At one point, Mateo asks his designated victim/accomplice "don't you know that murder is a ritual?" And in a perverse irony, although Mateo appears to be choreographing Stefano's predicament, it's suggested that the fey Count is in fact the ad man's alter-ego, a "prolongation of your true self". As is the case with **The Short Night of the Glass Dolls**, such underlying ideas are constantly present, but are never allowed to take precedence over the thriller elements. Milian and Clementi are both excellent leads and the scenes they share are undoubtedly the film's highlights. Aside from its intriguing narrative, the film is blessed with assured direction by Lucidi, excellent cinematography by Aldo Tonti and a sedate, harpsichord and violin-filled baroque score from Bacalova in keeping with the fatalistic plot and the Venetian locations.

Video:

Denmark: DVS - 95m, letterboxed as **Staende Skal Du Do**; Irish/TVT - identical version but with slightly different sleeve.

France: Farah Video - as **La victime designée**.

Germany: Hunter Home Video - with sleeve title **Der Todes-Engel**.

Holland: Eagle 6 - letterboxed with a superimposed video title as **Murder By Design**. The end credits are sharply curtailed by a trailer for **The Psychotronic Man**.

Italy: GVR General; Golden Video; Cecchi Gori.

All as **La vittima designata**

Sweden: DVS - as **The Designated Murder**.

THE MURDER CLINIC

La lama nel corpo ('The Knife in the Body')

Les nuits de l'épouvante (France: theatrical title 'The Nights of Terror')

Revenge of the Living Dead (USA: theatrical re-title)

1966 Italy/France Technicolor Techniscope 87m

Production Company: Leone Film/Ci.Ti.



LES NUITS
de L'ÉPOUVANTE

TECHNICOLOR - TECHNISCOP

French press-sheet for 'The Murder Clinic'

Cinematografica/Orphée Productions (Paris)
 Director: Michael Hamilton [Elio Scardamaglia]
 Producers: Elio Scardamaglia, Francesco Scardamaglia
 Story and Screenplay: Julian Berry [Ernesto Gastaldi], Martin Hardy [Luciano Martino]
 Based on *The Knife in the Body* by Robert Williams
 Cinematography: Marc Lane [Marcello Mastroianni]
 Editor: Richard Hartley [Alberto Gallitti]
 Art Director: Walter Parkington [Walter Patriarca]
 Music and Music Director: Frank Mason [Francesco De Masi]
 Assistant Director: Domenico De Felice
 Cast: William Berger (*Doctor Jean/Robert Vance*), Francoise Prevost (*Claudine*), Mary Young [Anna Maria Polani] (*Lizabeth*), Barbara Wilson (*Mary*), Delphine Maurin (*Laura*), Philippe Hersent, Harriet White [Medin] (*Sheena*), Max Dean [Massimo Righi] (*Fred*), Patricia Carr [Rossella Bergamonti], Ann

Sherman, William Gold, Anne Field, Grant Laramy [Germano Longo].

England in the 1870s. A clinic for the mentally disturbed, run by Doctor Robert Vance, is the focus for a series of gruesome murders perpetrated by a hooded individual using a straight-razor. Vance, who is secretly carrying out skin grafts on his wife's sister (who it transpires 'accidentally' fell into a lime-pit), appears to be the most likely culprit...

The Murder Clinic is a disappointing concoction of clichés which shows initial promise but fails to deliver. The film maintains an overtly melodramatic tone which is not helped by Francesco De Masi's unsubtle score. Amongst the over-acting thespians, Massimo Righi's deranged character Fred is the most disagreeable, having seemingly been inspired by Dwight Frye's Renfield from the Universal version of *Dracula*. Despite scenes of young women in nighties being slashed by the killer, this comparison with a 1930's production is

indicative of **The Murder Clinic's** old-fashioned ambience. Unfortunately, some effective naturalistic lighting within the titular clinic (representing candlelight) and the enjoyable petty jealousies and bitchiness displayed by most of the female characters, cannot compensate for the overall inertia of the piece. Trivia buffs may like to note that the building where most of the story occurs was used again (for trashier escapades) in **Slaughter Hotel**.

Video:

Denmark: TV Bio - 82m 51, letterboxed, English language, Danish subtitles as **The Murder Clinic**.

France: Master Production as **The Murder Clinic**.

USA: Sinister Cinema - as **The Murder Clinic**

Soundtrack:

Italy: CAM LP with fifteen tracks; CAM single with two tracks.



MURDER IN BLUE LIGHT

Omicidio a luce blu ('Homicide in Blue Light')
Blue Light Murder

1991 Italy Agfa Gavaert Telecolor 88m

Production Company: New Pentax Film S.r.l.

Director: Al Bradley [Alfonso Brescia]

Producer: Gianluca Curti, Stefano Curti

Story and Screenplay: Al Bradley [Alfonso Brescia]

Cinematography: Louis Lucky [Leandro Lucchetti?]

Editor: Charly Chandler

Art Director: Antonio Mussu

Music: Stefano Curti, Gianluca Bacconi

Cast: Florence Guerin, David A. Hess (*police detective*), Brian Peterson, Joseph Misiti,

Wendy Whindam, Federica Belfiore, Linda Udino, Sonya Topazio, Andrea Cagliosi, Stefano

Militi, Guglielmo Ferraiola, Mario Pirovano, Riccardo Perrotti, Lucio Rosato, Rik Battaglia.

New York. A young man is stabbed to death by an assailant wearing a mask and a police uniform. The killer leaves a bizarre 'calling card' by placing a grenade between the victim's legs. A role-playing prostitute satisfies various clients: she has sex with a customer with a rape fantasy (while her pimp watches from the room next door); she spansks an elderly customer and dresses up as a maid for another. But when an Oriental customer requests an enema she refuses and her pimp chases him into the night. He soon discovers the man lying dead by the docks with a knife in his chest and a grenade between his legs...

Murder in Blue Light is a lacklustre effort inspired by Brian De Palma's **Body Double** (the Italian title of which is **Omicidio a luci rosse**) while the killer in a cop uniform recalls **Order of Death**. Much of the screen time is taken up with the (supposedly) titillating activities at the whore's apartment, but their novelty soon wears thin. Possibly in an attempt to provide Argento-esque 'atmosphere', but more likely to hide the fact that this is a unattractive production shot mostly on a couple of sets, Brescia drowns the proceedings in a surfeit of dry ice and flashing lights (mainly blue, of course). Such obvious artifice can never replace inspired use of interiors or genuine outdoor locations and the film suffers accordingly. It's also a shame to see a talented performer like David Hess wasted in the role of a dull cop. Overall, this film is about as appealing as having one of the killer's trademark grenades placed between your legs!

Video:

Italy: Panarecord - 85m 13s, slightly letterboxed as **Omicidio a luci blu**.

THE MURDER MANSION

Quando Marta urla dalla tomba ('When Marta Screams from the Tomb')

La mansion de la niebla (Spain 'Fog Mansion')

Das Haus im Nebel (Germany 'The House in the Fog')



'The Murder Mansion'

Fog Mansion (pre-sales export title)
 1972 Spain/Italy Eastmancolor scope 105m
 Production Company: Mundial Film
 (Madrid)/Tritone Filmindustria (Rome)
 Director and Producer: Francisco Lara Polop
 Story: Luis G. De Blain
 Screenplay: Luis G. De Blain, Antonio Troiso
 Cinematography: Guglielmo Mancori
 Art Director: Jaime Perez Cubero
 Special Effects: Pablo Perez
 Music: Marcello Giombini
 Cast: Analia Gade' (*Elsa*), Evelyn Stewart (*Ida Galli*) (*Marta*), Andres Resino (*Fred*), Anna Lisa Nardi (*Laura*), Franco Fantasia (*Mr. Porter*), Eduardo Fajardo (*Mr. Tremont, a lawyer*), Alberto Dalbes (*Ernest*), Ingrid Garbo (*Ellen*), Yelena Samarina (*Mrs Tremont*), George [Jorge] R. gaud (*Elsa's father*).

USA: Laura, a young woman, hitches a ride on Fred's motorcycle but while crossing a valley they become lost in thick fog. They are nearly run down by a phantasmagoric Rolls-Royce and encounter Elsa, a young woman, whose car has crashed. She was terrified by two strange figures, a huge chauffeur and an old woman, who came looming out of the mist. Alongside an old cemetery, the strangers discover an abandoned village and a creepy mansion. Stranded by the fog, they are forced to seek refuge for the night...

As the above synopsis attests, this mainly Spanish production is an old-fashioned mystery more concerned with the fear of provincial backwaters than the urban-located terror of

most *gialli*. Although **The Murder Mansion** establishes its modern Stateside setting with a minor road rage incident on open highways, once the film withdraws onto studio sets shrouded in thick dry ice, it increasingly becomes a spook story. For despite an undemanding plot which could have come from the **Old Dark House** era or even **Scooby-Doo**, this is a surprisingly entertaining horror-thriller. Although vampires and the living dead appear to be the cause of the nocturnal disturbances, it soon becomes clear that the supposedly supernatural goings-on are in fact an elaborate ruse to gain an inheritance. The fright figures (intentionally?) recall Tor Johnson and Vampira, the cemetery is a gratifyingly eerie affair and the **The Murder Mansion** itself is tastefully decked out with visions of Hell by Hieronymous Bosch. Moreover, the film benefits from a reliable cast of character actors, most of whom end up playing dead by the violent conclusion. And even Marcello Giombini's old-style score is creepily captivating.

Video:

Germany: Greenwood Films - as **Das Haus im Nebel**.

USA: Unicorn Video - 83m 44s, full screen as **The Murder Mansion**; Charter - as **The Murder Mansion**.

MURDER OBSESSION

Murder obsession (Follia omicida)

Unconscious (France)

Follia omicida (Spain)

Satan's Altar (UK: video re-title)

The Wailing (UK: alternate video re-title)

Fear (USA)

Unconsciente (Venezuela)

Deliria (Italy: shooting title)

Murder Syndrome

1980 Italy/France Telecolor scope 97m

Production Company: Dionysio

Cinematografica S.r.l. (Rome)/Societe Nouvelle Cinevog (Paris)

Director: Robert Hampton (Riccardo Freda)

Producers: Pino Collura, Enzo Boetani, Simon Mizrahi

Story: Antonio Cesare Corti, Fabio Piccioni

Screenplay: Antonio Cesare Corti, Fabio Piccioni, Riccardo Freda

Cinematography: Cristiano Pogany

Editor: Riccardo Freda (uncredited)

Art Director and Costumes: Giorgio Desideri

Music: Franco Mannino with extracts by Bach and Liszt

Assistant Directors: Antonio Cesare Corti, Bernard Cohn

Cast: Stefano Patrizi (*Michael Stanford*), Anita Strindberg (*Glenda Stanford*), Laura Gemser (*Beryl Fisher*), John Richardson (*Oliver, the butler*), Martine Brochard (*Shirley Dawson*), Silvia Dionisio (*Deborah Jordan*), Henri Garcin (*Hans Volter*), Fabrizio Moroni.

During the shooting of a film, the lead actor Michael Stanford nearly strangles an actress named Beryl to death. Concerned by his seemingly homicidal tendencies, Michael takes a short vacation at his family's country estate, taking his girlfriend Deborah with him. The film's director Hans, the assistant director, and two actresses are also invited. That evening, Beryl is nearly drowned in the bath by a black-gloved figure. It emerges that Michael apparently murdered his own father, a famous composer, because he used to beat his mother. Michael sneaks up on Beryl with a knife in his hand but, moments later, they end up having sex by the riverside. When Michael awakens next to Beryl's naked body, he discovers she has been fatally stabbed in the abdomen. Hans is soon killed with an axe and Shirley is beheaded with a chainsaw...

If you overlook its acutely old-fashioned aura, this Oedipal *giallo*/horror story is a rewarding combination of melodramatic mania and stifled sexuality. There are a couple of pleasingly tacky, almost-surreal dream sequences involving bleeding skulls and a giant spider, while the nudity and gore recall the gratifyingly shoddy crowd-pleasers Freda used in **The Iguana with a Tongue of Fire** and **Tragica ceremo-**





nia en villa Alexander. The cast of Italian trash regulars also add to the film's dubious appeal. Unfortunately, Franco Mannino's piano-based classical score really grates and often sounds like the accompaniment to a silent movie. Perhaps aware that it seemed dated, overseas distributors replaced some of it with a synthesiser score more akin to the cheap slasher pics which proliferated at the time. It's not a winning aural combination.

Video:

Denmark: Plaza - cut, letterboxed.
Greece: Liberty - 87m 00s.
Italy: Capitol - 93m 06s, slightly letterboxed as **Murder Obsession** (*Follia omicida*).
Sweden: Trix - cut by two seconds during the chainsaw murder, letterboxed. Venezuela: label unknown - 91m 20s as **Unconsciente**.

UK: Mr.Video - 87m 34s: cut by 1m 18s as **Satan's Altar**; Budget Pack - 87m 34s: cut by 1m 18s as **The Wailing**.

USA: Wizard - 91m 34s: cut, in a fittingly vulgar large cardboard sleeve as **Fear**; HGV Video - 89m 11s as **The Wailing**.

MURDER TO THE TUNE OF THE SEVEN BLACK NOTES

Sette note in nero ('Seven Notes in Black')

Siete notas in negro (Spain 'Seven Notes in Black')

The Psychic (USA)

Dolce come morire (shooting title 'Sweet to Die')

Passione e sentimento (alternate shooting title 'Passion and Feeling')

1977 Italy Telecolor Vistavision 98m

The UK video sleeve for Murder Obsession

Production Company: Cinecompany S.r.l./Rizzoli Editore

Director: Lucio Fulci

Story and Screenplay: Lucio Fulci, Roberto Gianviti, Dardano Sacchetti

Cinematography: Sergio Salvati

Editor: Ornella Micheli

Art Director: Luciano Spadoni

Music: Franco Bixio, Fabio Frizzi, Vincenzo Tempera

Assistant Director: Roberto Giandalia

Cast: Jennifer O'Neill (*Virginia Ducci*), Gabriele Ferzetti (*Emilio Rospini*), Marc Porel (*Luca Fattori*), Gianni Garko (*Francesco Ducci*), Evelyn Stewart (*Ida Galli*) (*Gloria Ducci*), Jenny Tamburi (*Bruna, Luca's secretary*), Fabrizio Jovine (*Inspector D'Elia*), Riccardo Parisio Perrotti (*Melli, the Ducci's lawyer*), Vito Passer (*caretaker*), Loredana Savelli (*Giovanna Rospini*), Salvatore Puntillo (*second cab driver*), Bruno Corazzari (*Canevari, stable boy*), Francesco Angrisano (*first cab driver*), Veronica Michielini (*Mrs Giuliana Casati*), Paolo Pacino (*Inspector Russi*), Fausta Avelli (*Virginia as a girl*), Elizabeth Turner (*Virginia's mother*), Luigi Diberti (*the judge*).

Uncredited Cast: Ugo D'Alessio (*art gallery owner*).

England, 1959: a woman commits suicide by jumping off Dover cliffs. Meanwhile, in Florence, the woman's daughter has a vision of her mother's demise. Italy, eighteen years later Virginia's rich businessman husband, Francesco, flies off to London in a private jet.

While driving back from the airport, Virginia is disturbed by a vision which involves a broken mirror, a red light and a murdered woman. She decides to re-open an abandoned villa which belongs to Francesco. However, her visions take on a more sinister significance when her psychic powers reveal a woman's body which had been walled-up in the villa years before. The police begin an investigation.

Unfortunately, Francesco is their prime suspect because the dead woman is revealed to have been one of his former lovers...

This is one of Fulci's least satisfying films simply due to the fact that its central idea is drawn out over an unnecessarily long ninety-eight minutes. The psychic concept, which would have provided the basis for a neat **Tales of the Unexpected**-type short story, is simply not strong enough for an entire feature. The plotting possibilities offered by clairvoyants form

effective part of the *giallo* genre (*Don't Look Now, Deep Red, Nothing Underneath*), but here they are dwelt upon mercilessly. The obsessive desire to know the truth is also a recurring motif in *gialli* but in this one the female protagonist's quest becomes merely tiresome. And even though the clever narrative incorporates one of Poe's most ghoulie twists, the supposedly shocking ending is foreshadowed at throughout. Nevertheless, the film's production values are appealing (especially the editing and camerawork) and it's essential viewing for all Fulci fans, as it provides the link between his *gialli* (*One on Top...*; *Lizard*; and *Duckling*) and his acknowledged gore classics *Zombie Flesh-Eaters*; *City of the Living Dead* and *The Beyond*). Unfortunately, the director's next attempt to tackle Poe, *The Black Cat*, was also a weak effort.

Video:

Format: Mercury International Pictures - 94m 12s, slightly letterboxed, French language as *Prediction*.

Label: Domovideo - sell-thru release on a double feature with *Il prefetto di ferro*.

Format: Columbia Video - 97m 26s, letterboxed, English language, Japanese subtitles as *Murder To the Tune of the Seven Black Notes*.

Format: Vicitecor - 90m 47s, full screen, Spanish language as *Siete notas in negro*.

Format: Catalina - full screen; Lightning - full

Format: Video Treasures - cut, full screen. All as *The Psychic*.

MURDER-ROCK DANCING DEATH

Murderock uccide a passo di danza

(*Murderock Kill To Dance*)

Moord op de Academie (Holland: video)

(English title 'Murder at the Academy')

The Demon is Loose (USA: theatrical re-title)

Murder Rock (publicity title)

1984 Italy Telecolor 92m

Production Company: Scena Film

Director: Lucio Fulci

Producer: Augusto Caminito

Screenplay: Gianfranco Clerici, Lucio Fulci, Vincenzo Mannino

Cast: Gianfranco Clerici, Vincenzo Mannino, Roberto Gianviti, Lucio Fulci

Cinematography: Giuseppe Pinori

Editor: Vincenzo Tomassi

Art Director: Paolo Biagetti

Music and Music Director: Keith Emerson

Cost: Olga Karlatos (*Candice Norman*), Ray

Lovelock (*George Webb aka Robinson*), Claudio

Cassinelli (*Dick Gibson, the school administra-*

Cosimo Cinieri (Lieutenant Borges),

Giuseppe Mannajuolo (*Professor Davis*), Berna

Maria Do Carmo, Belinda Busato (*Gloria*

Stanton), Maria Vittoria Tolazzi, Geretta Marie

Fields (*Gioia Maria Scola*), Cristian Borromeo

(*My Stark*), Robert Gligorov (*Bert*), Carlo

Costa (*Bob*), Riccardo Parisio Perrotti

(*Greener*), Giovanni De Nava (*hotel receptionist*),

Anna Ryan (*Margie*), A. Lemerman (*Susan*), C.

Bizzanca (*Janis*).

Credited Cast: Lucio Fulci (*Phil, a theatrical*

agent), Pier Luigi Conti [aka Al Cliver] (*voice*

analyst).

Dance auditions for parts in a musical show are being held at the Arts for Living Center in New York. Susan is a favoured contender, until someone knocks her out with chloroform, then fatally punctures her heart with a long hat pin. Despite the murder, the auditions continue and, in place, another dancer, is the next victim. Meanwhile, Candice, a headstrong choreographer, has recurring nightmares in which a handsome man tries to murder her. She finally meets a model called George Webb, who bears a striking resemblance to her nightmare man, but in spite of this she is besotted. One of the remaining dancers is revealed to be one of George's old flames, and when she too is killed, she becomes the main suspect...

Fulci was back in the Big Apple, but following the critical flak engendered by the overtly sadis-

tic *New York Ripper*, producer Augusto Caminito, and possibly Lucio himself, obviously felt a need to tone down the nastiness and consequently the murders in this film are less gruesome. *Murder-Rock* is a blatant attempt to continue in the footsteps of the traditional *giallo* while pandering to the perceived 'youth' market which danced by box offices to see *Fame* and *Flashdance*. The notion that the talent school is 'a viper's nest' in which the ambitious young dancers will stop at nothing, even murder, to get ahead is hardly original and provides a catch of red herrings (including characters phallically identified as Dick and Willy!). It's therefore a pity that the killer is so obviously not one of the youthful wannabes. Even so, the film benefits from a strong cast of Fulci regulars (plus Cristian Borromeo from *Tenebrae*), and when the whodunnit elements of the story are on screen *Murder-rock* is reasonably effective, if surprisingly unstylish. Ex-prog rocker Keith Emerson, who contributed a stupendous score for *Inferno*, unfortunately provides some truly awful musical numbers. And even though the sight of perspiring nubile bodies, clad in miniscule leotards, will doubtless persuade some armchair voyeurs to suffer Emerson's disco ditties, when they kick in, wiser viewers will hit the fast forward button.

Video:

Australia: Roadshow - 88m 21s as *Murder-*

Rock Dancing Death.

France: Avoriaz-Gobbi/GCR - as *Murder-Rock*.



Spanish artwork for 'My Dear Killer'

Music by Keith Emerson



Germany: VPS - 89m 25s, slightly letterboxed as **Murder-Rock Dancing Death**.
 Holland: Concorde Video - 89m 52s, full screen, English language, Dutch subtitles as **Murder-Rock Dancing Death** with sleeve title **Moord op de Academie**.
 Italy: Domovideo - as **Murderock uccide a passo di danza**.
 Japan: label unknown - as **Murder-Rock Dancing Death**.

Laserdisc:

Taiwan - Jaigon (probably a bootleg release).

Soundtrack:

Italy: Bubble LP.

Japan - Soundtrack Listeners

Communications/Cinevox CD - with a mere eleven tracks running only 26m 35s.

USA: Chord LP.

MY DEAR KILLER

Mio caro assassino

Sumario sangriento de la pequena

Stefania (Spain 'Little Stefania's Bloody Brief')

Folie meurtriere (France, Belgium 'Murderous Madness')

1971 Italy/Spain Eastmancolor 98m

Production Company: B.R.C. Produzione

(Rome)/Kramot Cine/Tecisa Film (Madrid)

Director: Tonino Valerii

Story: Franco Buggeri, Roberto Leoni

Screenplay: Franco Buggeri, Roberto Leoni,

José G. Maesso, Tonino Valerii

Cinematography: Manuel Rojas

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Art Directors: Claudio Cinini, Francisco Canet

Music: Ennio Morricone

Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: Roberto Leoni

Cast: George Hilton (*Inspector Luca Peretti*),

Salvo Randone (*Maro*), William Berger (*Giorgio*

Canavese), Manolo Zarzo (*Sergeant Bozzi*),

Patty Shepard (*school teacher*), Piero Lulli

(*Alessandro Moroni*), Helga Line' (*Mrs Paradisi*),

Dante Maggio (*Mattia Guardapelle*), Alfredo

Mayo (*Beniamino*), Corrado Gaipa (*insurance*

official), Angesco Di Federico, Tullio Valli

(*Oliviero Moroni*), Dana Ghia (*Eleonora*

Moroni), Monica Randall (*Carla Moroni*), Enzo

Fiermonte (*building site manager*), Daniela

Rachele Barnes, Lola Gaos, Andrea Scotti (*post-*

man), Elisa Mainardi (*the Moroni's servant*),

Pietro Ceccarelli (*one of Canavese's 'gorillas'*),

Sergio Mendizabal, Sofia Dionisio, Irio Fantini,

Antonio Spaccatini, Marilu' Tolo (*Doctor Anna*

Borgese).

Inspector Luca Peretti is called to what appears to be a bizarre accident. At a swamp, a man has been decapitated by a dredger. However, the usual operator of the dredger is found hanged, the victim of a fake suicide. It transpires that the swamp victim, Paradisi, previously worked for an insurance company who handled 'the Moroni Case' - when a young girl was kidnapped, her father set about tracking down her abductors, only to be killed himself. Paradisi's common-law widow is subsequently strangled by a black-gloved figure. Inspector Peretti finds a child's drawing clutched in the dead woman's hand, leading back to the school which the Moroni girl attended. Her former school-teacher is attacked with a circular saw and finished off with a statue - by someone she knows... Sharing its repellent child-killer theme with the following year's **Don't Torture a Duckling** and **Who Saw Her Die?**, this is a consummate *giallo*, which effortlessly draws its audience into a complicated narrative populated by dubious characters (including at least one paedophile). To the credit of the four scriptwriters, these characters are presented as more than mere pawns in a detective game, which gives **My Dear Killer** greater depth. Moreover, George Hilton's confident detective is shown to also have a real life, and is seen sharing moments of tenderness with his wife (this also allows the killer to observe them making love, providing an added degree of discomfort to the proceedings). There is an unexpectedly graphic murder in which the killer utilises a circular saw



GEORGE HILTON IN



vietato minori di 14 anni



Mio caro Assassino

CON

SALVO RANDONE - WILLIAM BERGER - PATTY SHEPARD

DANA GHIA - TULLIO VALLI E CON MARILU' TOLO

UN FILM DI

TONINO VALERII

PRODOTTO DA

MANOLO BOLOGNINI PER LA B.R.C. PRODUZIONE FILM - KRAMOT CINEMATOGRAFICA

Colore della TECHNOHOME S.p.A.

and the film also includes more gruesome scenes than other genre entries, such as the fact that the dead father and his kidnapped daughter were found heavily decomposed, the girl having been left to starve to death.

Video:

France and Belgium: Delta Video Diffusion - letterboxed as **Folie meurtrière**.

UK: Redemption - 95m 35s, letterboxed at 1.33:1, excellent quality as **My Dear Killer**. The sleeve is one of their best.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Cerberus LP; CAM CD - on a double-bill with **Le mani sporche**, a TV drama.

MYSTERE

Pako HongKongiin (Finland: video sleeve title)

Mysterie (Sweden: video sleeve re-title)

Dagger Eyes (USA)

Murder Near Perfect (?)

1983 Italy Technicolor scope 87m

Production Company: Tris Film

Director: Carlo Vanzina

Story: Enrico Vanzina

Screenplay: Enrico Vanzina, Carlo Vanzina

Cinematography: Giuseppe Maccari

Editor: Raimondo Crociani

Art Director: Paola Comencini

Music: Armando Trovajoli

Cast: Carole Bouquet (*Mystere*), John Steiner

(*Renov, a Soviet killer*), Janet Agren (*Pamela*),

Gabriele Tinti (*Mink Visione*), Duilio Del Prete

(*Captain Levi, Colt's superior*), Philip Coccioletti

(*Inspector Colt*), Peter Berling (*Reinhardt*),

Marcia Briscoe (*Marta/Martha*), Jinny Steffen

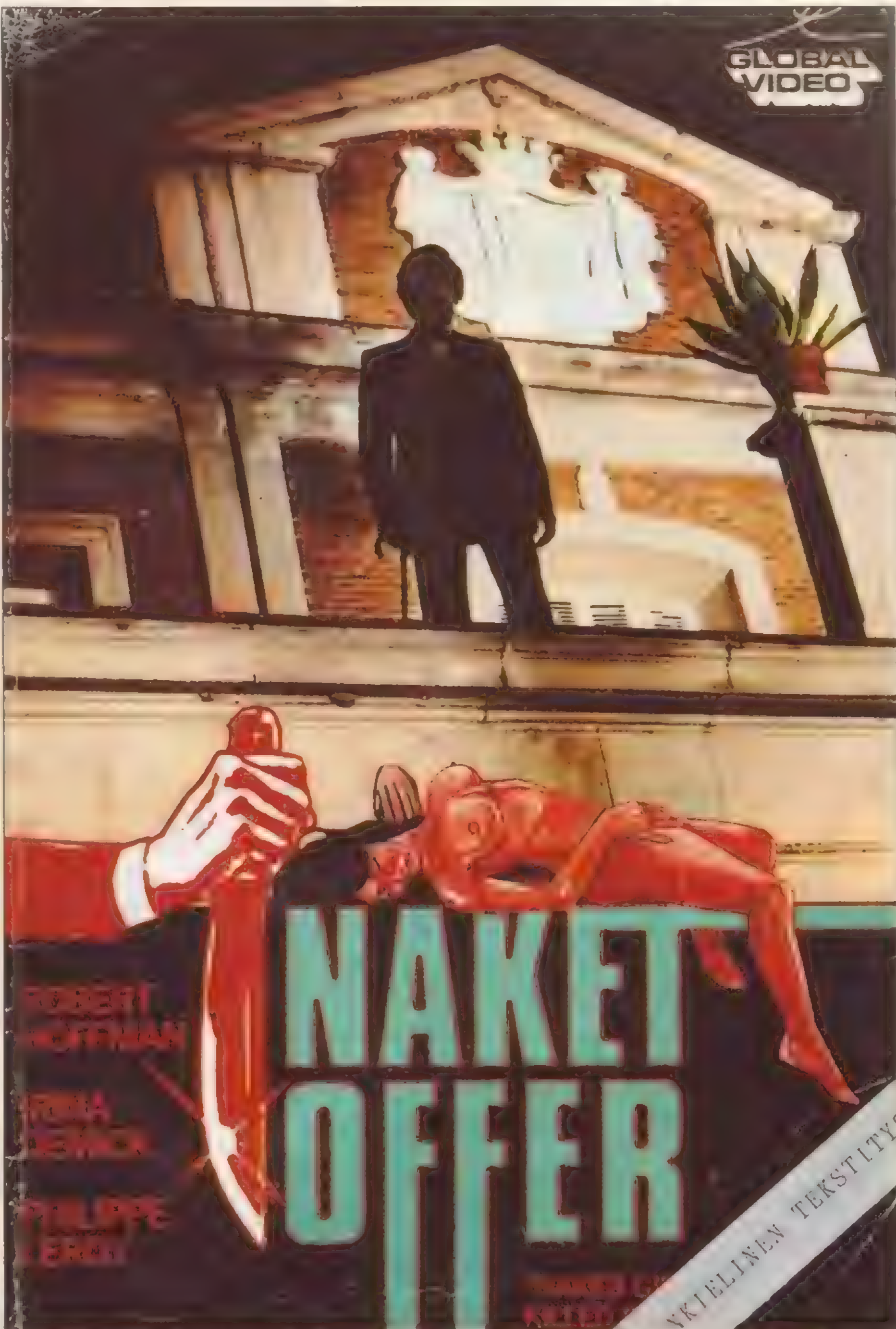
(*Patana*), Samuel Goldzadeck, Gregory

Bregoff, Stefano Dovanati, Angelo Maggi, Livio

Barassi.

Some: by the Spanish Steps, a German tourist, Reinhardt, accidentally photographs a hired killer shooting a politician in a Kennedy-style assassination. Pamela, a high-class prostitute, steals a gold lighter containing the negative. Reinhardt and Pamela are murdered by a mysterious killer who uses a cane with a switchblade. He turns his attentions to Mystere because she now has the lighter. Colt, an American cop, is initially hostile towards Mystere but is forced to protect her from the killer and they develop a relationship. It soon becomes clear that Soviet agents are also after the incriminating negative...

Mystere (French for mystery) is a slick, and occasionally suspenseful, erotic thriller. Carole



Bouquet has a strong role as a confident hooker but cinematic convention requires that she has to be 'protected' by the male lead, an American cop called Colt, supposedly on assignment in Italy (hey, let's sell the movie to the Yanks!). In fact, Colt is something of an ambiguous 'hero' who is not above slapping around Mystere or trying to make off with ill-gotten loot. Easy to dismiss as a slightly shallow production, this is actually a fairly agreeable way to spend ninety minutes. Fans of Italian trash will find it difficult to resist a thriller with John Steiner as a seemingly unstoppable Russian agent and Gabriele Tinti as a smirking pimp. And in a slightly kinky touch, Janet Agren's demise includes a shot of the mystery killer wiping his blade clean of his victim's blood on her white panties. Armando Trovajoli's score (coincidentally?) sounds similar to Giorgio Moroder's **Cat People** themes from the previous year. Bouquet was again mixed up with international sex 'n' spies in the inferior James Bond adventure **For Your Eyes Only**.

Video:

Finland: Gerit Video - 84m 04s, full screen with sleeve title **Pako Hongkongiin**.

France: Carrere as **Mystere**.

Germany: Atlas.

Greece: AV (Audio Visual) Enterprises - 84m 02s, full screen as **Mystere**.

Italy: Creazioni Home Video, Mondadori. Both as **Mystere**.

Norway: Big Partner Video - 88m 00s, full screen as **Mystere** with sleeve title **Mysterie**.

Sweden: Prisma Film and Video - with sleeve title **Mysterie**.

USA: Vista - as **Dagger Eyes**.

NAKED GIRL KILLED IN PARK

Ragazza tutta nuda assassinata nel parco ('Naked Girl Found Killed in Park')

Joven de buena familia sospechosa de asesinato (Spain 'Youngsters From a Good Family Suspected of Being a Killer')

Alastron Uhri (Denmark: video sleeve title)

Naket offer (Finland: video sleeve title)

1972 Italy/Spain Eastmancolor Telecolor 95m

Production Company: Luis Film (Rome)/Dauro

Film (Madrid)

Director: Al Bradley [Alfonso Brescia]

Executive Producer: Luigi Mondello

Story: Antonio Fos

Screenplay: Antonio Fos, Peter Skerl [Virgilio

Mattei], Gianni Antonio Martucci

Script Collaborators: Enzo Gicca, Aldo Crudo.

Alfonso Brescia

L'EVENTREUR DE NEW YORK

un film de LUCIO FULCI



FABRIZIO DE ANGELIS présente un film de LUCIO FULCI avec JACK HEDLEY · ALMANTA KELLER
HOWARD ROSS · ANDREW PAINTER · ALEXANDRA DELLI COLLI et PAOLO MALCO FULVIA FILM S.p.A. ROMA

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Cinematographer: Alfonso Nieva
Editor: Rolando Salvatori
Director: Cruz Baletzna
Music: Carlo Savina
Assistant Director: Gianni Antonio Martucci
Cast: Robert Hoffman (*Chris Buyer*), Pilar Masquez (*Catherine Wallenberger*), Irina Lomick (*Magda*), Teresa Gimpera (*Kirsty Buyer*, *Doris' wife*), Howard Ross (*Renato Rossini*) (*Barthel*), Patrizia Adiutori (*Barbara*), Philippe Leroy (*Martin*), Adolfo Celi (*Inspector Huber*), Franco Ressel (*Bruno, the butler*).

Second: Johan Wallenberger, a rich financier, is killed in the House of Horrors at an amusement park. His insurance company assign Chris Buyer, one of their best agents, to investigate because a few days prior to his death, the businessman took out a million dollar life insurance policy. Chris ingratiates himself with Catherine, Wallenberger's beautiful daughter, and it emerges that she is being plagued by a black-maler. Chris is invited to the Wallenbergers' country house and is soon the centre of attention for several attractive women. Meanwhile, the plot thickens...

The clipped title is actually a newspaper headline which reports the discovery of a naked woman's corpse but this is possibly the most interesting aspect of this typically convoluted and rather dreary *giallo*. Robert Hoffman (*Spasmo*) sleepwalks through another shady role but at least receives some support from competent genre regulars like Celi, Ross, Leroy and Ressel. The real stars of this uninspiring thriller are the alluring female cast but even their presence cannot improve a thoroughly ordinary inheritance thriller. Alfonso Brescia is hardly an innovative auteur (he also contributed the bland *Murder in Blue Light*) and his direction here proves to be as flat as usual. Co-scripter and assistant director Gianni Martucci, a hack-in-waiting, later directed *Trauma* and the dreary *Red Monks*.

Video:

Denmark: label unknown - as *Naked Girl Killed in Park* with sleeve title *Alastron Uhri*.
 Finland: Videce - 88m 16s, full screen, dark transfer as *Naked Girl Killed in Park* with sleeve title *Naket Offer*.
 Italy: AVO Film - *Ragazza tutta nuda assassinata nel parco*.

THE NEW YORK RIPPER

Lo squartatore di New York
Der dodder van New York (Belgium)
Blodig Voldtaegt (Denmark: video sleeve title)
L'éventreur de New York (France)
Der New York Ripper (Germany)
De Slacher van New York (Holland)
El destripador de Nueva York (Spain)
El descuartizador de Nueva York (Venezuela)
The Beauty Killer (pre-production title)
Psycho Ripper (pre-production title)
The Ripper (working title)
 1982 Italy Eastmancolor LV (Luciano Vittori) 91m
 Production Company: Fulvia Film S.r.l. (Rome)
 Director: Lucio Fulci
 Producer: Fabrizio De Angelis
 Story and Screenplay: Gianfranco Clerici, Vincenzo Mannino, Lucio Fulci
 Cinematography: Luigi Kuveiller
 Editor: Vincenzo Tomassi
 Art Director and Costumes: Massimo Lentini
 Music and Music Director: Francesco De Masi
 Assistant Director: Roberto Giandalia
 Cast: Jack Hedley (*Lieutenant Fred Williams, nicknamed 'Barnaby'*), Almanta Keller (*Antonellina Interlenghi*) (*Fay Majors*), Howard Ross (*Renato Rossini*) (*Mikos Skalinda, 'Mickey the Greek'*), Andrew Painter (*Andrea Occhipinti*) (*Peter Bunch*), Alessandra Delli Colli (*Jane Forrester Lodge*), Paolo Malco (*Doctor Davis*), Cinzia De Ponti (*Rosie, victim on ferry*), Laurence Welles (*Cosimo Cinieri*) (*Doctor Lodge*), Daniela Doria (*Jenny, also called Kitty, the prostitute*), Babette New (*Mrs Weissburger*), Zora Kerowa (*Zora Ulla Keslerova*) (*Eva, female participant in sex show*), Paul Guskin, Anthon Kagan, Johs Cruze, Marsha MacBride, Giordano

Falzone (*Doctor Barry Jones, the coroner*), Rita Silva, Lucio Fulci (*Lieutenant Williams' superior*), Barbara Cupisti, Martin Sorrentino, Violetta Jean, Cesare Di Vito, Elisa Cervi, Chiara Ferrari.

New York: The dismembered body of a model is discovered. Soon after, a female cyclist is attacked by an assailant making bizarre duck-like noises and a female sex show performer is savagely murdered, her crotch mutilated with a broken bottle. Another young woman, Fay, is attacked and dashes into an empty cinema. The killer follows and is revealed to be a young man. But this revelation is actually a nightmare in which Fay imagines her boyfriend Peter was the killer. The police announce that their main suspect is a lowlife individual with missing fingers, which prompts a nymphomaniac who is having sex with a sleazy man (named Scellenda) fitting this description to go into a panic. She too is promptly slashed to death. Meanwhile, the ripper continues to taunt police, even going as far as torturing and killing a prostitute frequented by the world-weary cop on the case. Scellenda's corpse is subsequently discovered and it emerges that he was just a procurer for the killer...

Packed with graphic sexual violence, *The New York Ripper* is a landmark film in terms of outrageous imagery. If ever there was a film which typified the gutter-press term 'nasty', this is it. The sick kill scenes are combined with salacious revelations about the lifestyles of the killer's victims, made even grubbier by the film's cheap look. In contrast to the director's Gothic successes (*The Beyond* and *City of the Living Dead*) this has a washed-out, rather dreary ambience which could charitably be seen as an attempt to highlight the grim subject matter but is more than likely evidence of an opportunist and hasty production. *Ripper* is undoubtedly Fulci's most controversial legacy (*Nightmare Concert* is gorier but its effect is muted by its satirical approach, while *Touch of Death*, which also revels in violence-against-women, has never received wide distribution) and much has been made of the director's infamous misogyny. But this knee-jerk reaction ignores the fact that Gianfranco Clerici and Vincenzo Mannino were responsible for this film's original storyline and their explorations of similarly dubious themes go back to 1974 with *Five Women For the Killer*. Male retribution for sexual indiscretions by females is an unavoidable trait of Italian exploitation (see *So Sweet, So Dead* and many others) and Fulci's notoriety stems from the fact that he didn't give a damn about graphically depicting what many films merely hinted at. This doesn't excuse *Ripper*'s objectionable moral tone, it just puts it into context. Like *The Iguana with the Tongue of Fire* or more appropriately *Giallo a Venezia* (both Fulci and Landi's films offer a crotch stabbing demise) this film is another guilty trip for fans of tasteless screen violence. If trash addicts can enjoy the outrageous antics of *Ilsa, She-Wolf of the SS* or laugh at the ultra-sick humour in *The Incredible Torture Show/Bloodsucking Freaks* then they can surely stomach this savage *giallo* without getting too uptight. But what really defeats most Fulci apologists is the fact that the killer talks like Donald Duck. This was a really stupid idea that dispels any of the suspense and reduces the film to an unintentional comedy. Pity.

Video:

Austria: Professional Cine Media - 87m 21s, letterboxed at 2.00:1, English language, washed out colour, as *The New York Ripper*.
 Belgium: MPM Productions - 87m 18s, letterboxed, bright colours, as *The New York Ripper* with sleeve title *De dodder van New York*.
 Denmark: Irish Video - uncut, letterboxed as the sleeve title *Blodig Voldtaegt*. France: MPM Productions; Rene Chateau/Hollywood Boulevard. Both as *L'éventreur de New York*.
 Germany: UFA - as *Der New York Ripper*.
 Greece: Videosonic, Home Video Hellas - both uncut, letterboxed as *The New York Ripper*.
 Holland: MPM; Zuid. Both as *The New York Ripper*.

Italy: Star Video; AB Video. Both uncut as *Lo squartatore di New York*.
 Spain: JF Films - 87m 22s, letterboxed, Spanish language as *El destripador de Nueva York*.
 Sweden: Video Invest - uncut, letterboxed, good picture quality, bright colours. The ending shot of Paolo Malco is shorter by five seconds.
 Venezuela: label unknown - uncut as *El descuartizador de Nueva York*.
 USA: Vidmark - cut as *The New York Ripper*.

Laserdisc:

Austria: Professional Cine Media - 87m 21s, English language, letterboxed, washed out colour, as *The New York Ripper*.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Beat Records LP and on a CD double-billed with Piero Piccioni's score for *Una tomba aperta... una bara vuota*.

NEXT!

Lo strano vizio della Signora Wardh ('The Strange Vice of Madam Wardh')
La perversa Senora Wardh (Spain 'The Perverse Senora Wardh')
Les nuits folles de Mme. Ward (Belgium 'The Mad Nights of Madame Ward')
Den Djaevolske Kniv (Denmark)
L'Etrange vice de Madame Ward (France 'The Strange Vice of Madame Ward')
Der Killer von Wien (Germany 'The Killer From Vienna')
The Next Victim (USA: theatrical re-title)
Blade of the Ripper (USA: video title)
 1970 Italy/Spain Technostampa Chromoscope 96m
 Production Company: Devon Film (Rome)/Coperlines (Madrid)
 Director: Sergio Martino
 Producers: Luciano Martino, Antonio Crescenzi
 Story: Eduardo Maria Brochero
 Screenplay: Eduardo Maria Brochero, Ernesto Gastaldi, Vittorio Caronia
 Cinematography: Emilio Foriscot
 Editor: Eugenio Alabiso
 Music: Nora Orlandi
 Music Director: Paolo Ormi
 Cast: George Hilton (*George Corro*), Edwige Fenech (*Julie Ward*), Cristina (Conchita) Airolti (*Carol Baxa*), Manuel Gil (*Neal*), Alberto De Mendoza (*Neil Ward*), Ivan Rassimov (*Jean*), Carlo Alighiero, Bruno Corazzari (*assailant*), Marella Corbi, Miguel Del Castillo, Luis De Tejada, Brizio Mortinaro, Pouchie, Mira Vidotto.

A prostitute is razored to death by an unidentified killer. Julie Ward, wife of an official at the American embassy in Munich, is disturbed by reports about a sex killer. She is convinced she is being stalked by Jean, a sadistic ex-lover and, worse still, suspects that he may be the killer. In the meantime, a blonde woman is slashed to death while taking a shower. Bored with her husband Neal, Julie becomes involved with George, the cousin of her attractive friend Carol. Unfortunately, the latter is murdered after a rendezvous in the park. While recovering from the shock, Julie is terrorised in an underground car park and just manages to escape. She and Neal then discover Jean's body in a blood-filled bathtub. Soon after, the killer is fatally injured when one of his would-be victims retaliates with a pair of scissors. In the meantime, distraught Julie has relocated to Portugal, taking George with her. But even in this supposedly safe haven Julie is soon threatened again...

Next! is an apt English-language monicker because it not only announces the killer's intentions, it also provides a cue for the legion of Italian producers who sought to profit from the genre in the early Seventies. This film, one of a dozen or so key entries, was partly responsible for the genre's explosion because it takes many of the themes (Freudian theory, duplicitous sexual partners) and motifs (razor-brandishing killer, shower murders) which had already been developed and fine-tuned them. They were then exploited by other film-makers over the next few years (for example, the 'fake suicide using an ice-cube to cover the crime play')

which was used in *The Victim* and years later in *La ragazza di Cortina*). *Next!* is not merely a successful distillation of *giallo* ingredients, it blends them together in a heady cocktail of story-telling and style, the success of which cannot have escaped its imitators. The film looks great and Martino captures Fenech's tribulations from a plethora of camera angles which, aided by judicious editing, propel the viewer into the action. And not content with depicting the very real attacks of the killer, Martino also subjects Fenech (and the viewer) to a fish-eye lens dream sequence in which the heroine is tormented by the killer's victims. Bruno Nicolai's main title theme is an unexciting affair although later on he contributes some truly delirious pieces which combine a bombardment of distorted drumbeats with the sound of a boy choir! The casting is also crucial. This was Fenech's first starring role for producer (and lover) Luciano and his director brother Sergio. The team would eventually tire of thrillers and move into equally successful sex comedies but the next few films they made were prime examples of *gialli*. Evil-looking Rassimov would also become a Martino regular as well as enlivening films like *Spirits of Death*, while suave Hilton went on to play a smoothy in a brace of thrillers for various directors. *Next!* also benefits from some well-used German and Portuguese locations, such as the imposing park where sexy Christina Airolti's character is killed.

Video:

Greece: VideotheAma - as *Next!*

Hungary: Hungarovideo - cut: approx. 82m, letterboxed.

Italy: CVR Realvision - approx. 93m but cut (sex scenes and murders) and from a jumpy print, letterboxed at 1.77:1 as *Lo strano vizio della Signora Wardh*.

Spain: Video M30 - letterboxed as *La perversa Senora Wardh*. Good sleeve artwork.

USA: Video Gems - violence and nudity cut, with sleeve title *The Next Victim* and on-screen title *Next!*; Saturn - cut (but with some violence and nudity), horrible pan and scan full screen as *Blade of the Ripper*; Regal Video Inc. - 87m 35s, cut (but with some violence and nudity), horrible full screen pan and scan, washed out colours, with sleeve title *Blade of the Ripper* but no title on screen.

Unused sleeve artwork for *Redemption's* aborted UK release



THE NIGHT EVELYN CAME OUT OF THE GRAVE

La notte che Evelyn uscì dalla tomba ('The Night Evelyn Came Out of the Tomb')

Evelyn est sortie de sa tombe (Belgium 'Evelyn Is Out of Her Tomb')

L'appel de la chair (France: 'The Call of the Flesh')

La crypte du fou (France: video re-title 'The Madman's Crypt')

Holocauste pour une vierge (France: video re-title 'Holocaust For a Virgin')

Die Grotte der Vergessenen Leichen (Germany 'The Grotto of the Forgotten Corpse')

Stumme Scheie (Germany: alternate title)

The Night She Rose From the Tomb (UK: theatrical title)

Sweet to be Kissed, Hard to Die (?)

1971 Italy Technicolor Techniscope 103m

Production Company: Phoenix Cinematografica

Director: Emilio P. Miraglia

Producer: Antonio Sarno

Story: Fabio Pittorru, Massimo Felisatti

Screenplay: Fabio Pittorru, Massimo Felisatti, Emilio P. Miraglia

Cinematography: Gastone Di Giovanni

Editor: Romeo Ciatti

Art Director: Lorenzo Baraldi

Music: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: Palmambrogio Molteni

Cast: Anthony Steffen [Antonio De Teffé] (*Lord Alan Cunningham*), Marina Malfatti (*Gladys*), Rod Murdock (*Albert, the gamekeeper*), Giacomo Rossi-Stuart (*Richard Timberlane, Cunningham's doctor*), Umberto Raho (*Farley, Cunningham's bailiff*), Roberto Maldera (*George, Cunningham's cousin*), Joan C. Davis (*Aunt Agatha*), Erika Blanc [Enrica Bianchi Colombatto] (*Susie*), Ettore Bevilacqua, Maria Teresa Tofano (*Polly*), Brizio Montinaro, Paola Natale.

Lord Alan Cunningham is recovering from a nervous breakdown which necessitates his being detained in a psychiatric clinic. Once released, Cunningham takes redheaded prostitutes back to his countryside castle, where he tortures and kills them. His doctor and friend, Richard Timberlane, advises him to forget the past and re-marry but Cunningham is obsessed with Evelyn, his dead wife, and even organises a seance at the castle. One night, he brings a stripper called Susie home and tries to kill her. A chase ensues but as the delirious aristocrat enters Evelyn's tomb he passes out. When he recovers consciousness Susie has disappeared. He soon meets Gladys, another redhead, and marries her almost immediately. Soon after, family members begin to die in mysterious circumstances. Becoming more distraught, Cunningham visits Evelyn's tomb and sees his wife rise from the dead...

Evelyn reworks the old 'deadly inheritance' plot again but this lurid interpretation will always be cherished by fans of trash cinema for its wild imagery: the cheesy sado-masochistic scenes in the castle torture chamber (worth the price of admission alone); Erika Blanc's initial appearance, thrusting her bottom out of a coffin as part of a strip show; the foxes ravenously devouring Aunt Agatha's entrails; and the splat-tery surprise-ridden climax. Never mind that former Spaghetti Western star Anthony Steffen over-acts painfully as the deranged aristocrat or that his English 'castle' is a patently Italian pile. Other attempts at Englishness, such as the policemen with unconvincing uniforms, indicate that this production is more concerned with plot mechanics and visitations from beyond the grave than depicting reality. So who's quibbling? Like Polselli's *Delirium*, this film exists in a Euro-tosh dream-world where anything can happen in the name of exploitation. The final seal on the tomb is provided by Bruno Nicolai's score which combines sublime easy-listening tunes and psychedelic rock numbers.

Video:

Australia: Seven Keys - 95m 10s, full screen, taken from a US print.

France: Gemini Video - as *La crypte du fou* VIP - as *Holocauste pour une vierge*.

Greece: Los Angeles Video - 93m 26s, print damage, letterboxed.

Italy: Creazioni Home Video - 87m 52s, fullscreen as *La notte che Evelyn uscì dalla tomba*.

USA: Sinister Cinema - 98m 06s, letterboxed approx 1.80:1 as *The Night Evelyn Came Out of the Grave*; Something Weird 'Sexy Shockers' - 99m 09s, compressed to incorrect aspect ratio, slightly washed out colours, damaged print as *The Night Evelyn Came Out of the Grave*.

NIGHTMARE CONCERT (A CAT IN THE BRAIN)

Un gatto nel cervello (Il volti del terrore)

('A Cat in the Brain - The Face of Terror')

1990 Italy Fuji Color 89m

Production Company: Executive Cine TV S.r.l.

Director: Lucio Fulci

Producers: Luigi Nannerini, Anthony Clear [Antonio Lucidi]

Story: Lucio Fulci, John Fitzsimmons [Giovanni Simonelli]

Screenplay: Lucio Fulci with assistance by Antonio Tentori

Cinematography: Alessandro Grossi

Editor: Vincenzo Tomassi

Music: Fabio Frizzi

Assistant Director: Roberto Lucidi

Cast: Lucio Fulci (*Lucio Fulci*), David I. Thompson (*Professor Egon Swharz, the psych*)



atrist), Jeffrey Kennedy (*Gabrielli, the police man*), Melissa Lang [Malissa Longo] (*Katya Swharz*), Ria Desimon [Ria De Simone] (*the soprano*), Veronica Zinny, Brett Halsey (*the monster*), Sacha [Maria] Darwin (*woman in the oven*), Robert Egon (*second monster*), Shilet Angel (*Filipo, the producer*), Judy Morrow (*the nurse*), Layla Frank, Georgia Moore, Paul Muller, Marco Di Stefano, Maurice Poli, Lubka Lensi [Lenzi].

Uncredited Cast: Vincenzo Luzzi (*man with chainsaw*).

A film director called Lucio Fulci experiences nightmares and visions in which he is haunted by the violent images in his horror movies. He seeks the assistance of Professor Egon Swharz, a psychiatrist. Unfortunately, Swharz is a psychopath who hypnotises the tormented director into believing that he is responsible for a series of sadistic murders. However, there is a final twist...

Clearly aimed primarily at his gorehound fans



A scene from 'Nothing Underneath'

This is a cheap, opportunistic and gleefully gory amalgam of scenes from Fulci's own films such as **Touch of Death** (in which Brett Halsey plays a Bluebeard-type character who kills and eats his female partners) and **Sodom's Ghost** (which features Nazi zombies), plus excerpts from other low-rent productions such as Lenzi's **La porte d'inferno**; Bianchi's **Massacre** and **The Murder Secret**; Lucchetti's **Bloody Psycho**; and Milioni's **Bloody Moon**. This catalogue of crap represents the lowest point of Italian horror cinema and so a 'best bits' compilation can hardly hope to capitalise on them. The opening shots of puppet cats tearing into an oversize 'brain' sets the tone immediately and from there on it's a rather obvious trawl through scene after scene of the embittered director's self-doubting act. Unfortunately, he spends a considerable amount of screen time driving around in a white Mercedes visiting 'Dinecitta' and the relentless gore all becomes a bit passé by the conclusion. Fulci's assertion that Wes Craven copied the idea of starring in a film in which he is haunted by his own horrific creations is a fanciful but patently ridiculous notion and quite why the director chose to present himself to the world in such a bad light defies explanation. Full marks to Fulci collaborators from the good old days such as Fabio Frizzi, who provides a half-decent pastiche of themes from the director's past glories, and Vincenzo Tomassi, for pulling together what must have been a Nightmare Edit.

Video:

Austria: JP-Video - 88m 59s, full screen as **Nightmare Concert (A Cat in the Brain)**.
Italy: Empire Video - as **Un gatto nel cervello**;
Ricordi - as **Un gatto nel cervello**.
Japan: label unknown - letterboxed as **Nightmare Concert (A Cat in the Brain)**.

Laserdisc:

Austria: JP-Video - full screen as **Nightmare Concert (A Cat in the Brain)**.

USA: Box office spectaculars.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Beat CD - on a must-have double-bill with **Zombi 2**.

NOTHING UNDERNEATH

Sotto il vestito niente ('Nothing Underneath the Dress')

Ou'est passée Jessica? (France)

Modellmorden (Sweden: video sleeve title 'Model Murder')

The Final Shot (publicity sales title)

1985 Italy Eastmancolor 94m

Production Company: Faso Film

Director: Carlo Vanzina

Producer: Achille Manzotti

Story: Marco Parma

Screenplay: Enrico Vanzina, Carlo Vanzina, Franco Ferrini

Cinematography: Giuseppe Maccari

Editor: Raimondo Crociani

Art Director: Giuseppe Paltrinieri

Music: Pino Donaggio

Music Director: Natale Massara

Cast: Tom Schanley (*Bob Crane*), Renee

Simonsen (*Barbara*), Donald Pleasence

(*Inspector Danesi*), Nicola Perrin (*Jessica*

Crane), Catherine Noyes (*Carrie Blynn*), Maria

McDonald (*Margaux Wilson*), Cyrus Elias

(*Giorgio Zanoni*), Sonia Raule (*Cristina*

Landolfi), Paolo Tomei (*hotel porter*), Anna

Galiena (*Diana*), Big Laura, Mary McGuire

(*model*), Mimmo Sepe (*Interpol Agent Rizzo*).

In Yellowstone Park, USA, Bob Crane experiences a psychic link with his sister Jessica, who is working as a model in Milan. Convinced that Jessica has been stabbed by a scissor-wielding killer, Bob flies over to Milan the next day. He finds that she has disappeared and reports his concerns to the police. Although initially sceptical, Inspector Danesi takes an interest in the case, especially when another model is butchered. It seems that the women were both

at a soirée organised by a sleazy jeweller called Giorgio Zanoni who convinced them to play Russian Roulette for kicks. One of the models was killed and the remaining three were each paid 100,000 dollars worth of diamonds to keep quiet. The killing continues and, unfortunately for Bob, Jessica (who is still missing) is the main suspect. Dismayed, he prepares to leave Italy when he suddenly has another psychic experience...

Despite rather pedestrian direction from Carlo Vanzina (who previously helmed **Mystere**), **Nothing Underneath** is one of the better Italian thrillers from the late Eighties. The psychic connection theme is never fully explored but remains a diverting gimmick (premonitions of death are a regular feature of *gialli* - also see **Don't Look Now**, **Deep Red**, **Murder To the Tune of the Seven Black Notes**). Much like the voyeuristic hotel porter who spies on the models, Vanzina wastes no opportunity to reveal the physical attributes of the attractive female cast, while the sole name player, genre regular Donald Pleasence, has a nicely understated role as a police inspector who is about to retire but faces a final perplexing case (similar to his character in **Off Balance**). The finale, in which the killer attacks Bob with a huge electric drill-bit, is unashamedly clichéd, but nonetheless effective, and the shattering last shot recalls the final moments of **The Crimes of the Black Cat**.

Video:

France: Avoriaz-Gobbi/GCR - as **Ou'est passée Jessica?**

Italy: AVO Film - as **Sotto il vestito niente**

Sweden: Scanbox - uncut as **Nothing**

Underneath with sleeve title **Modellmorden**

UK: Avatar - 90m 13s, full screen as **Nothing**

Underneath.

THE OASIS OF FEAR

Un posto ideale per uccidere ('An Ideal



French artwork (based on Salvador Dali's face) for *L'occhio dietro la parete*

Place for Murder')

Un endroit idéal pour tuer (France 'An Ideal Place to Kill')

Meurtre par interim (France: alternate title 'Murder in the Interim')

Un sito ideal para matar (Spain 'An Ideal Place for Murder')

Dirty Pictures (USA: video title)

Deadly Trap

1971 Italy/France Technicolor Techniscope 89m

Production Company: Compagnia Cinematografica Champion (Rome)/Les Films Concorde (Paris)

Director: Umberto Lenzi

Producer: Carlo Ponti

Story: Umberto Lenzi

Screenplay: Lucia Drudi Demby, Antonio Altoviti, Umberto Lenzi

Cinematography: Alfio Contini

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Director: Vanni Castellani

Music: Bruno Lauzi

Assistant Director: Fulvio Barresi

Cast: Irene Papas (*Barbara Slater*), Ray Lovelock (*Richard Butler*), Ornella Muti (*Ingrid Sherman*), Michel Bardinet (*Baratti, a lawyer*), Jacques Stany (*Stanislav*) (*official*), Umberto D'Orsini (*purchaser of porn mags*), Calisto Tanzi (*police inspector*), Ugo Adinolfi (*petrol station attendant*), Salvatore Borgese (*Agostino's friend*), Giuseppe Terranova (*eye-witness*), Carla Mancini, Umberto Raho (*police inspector*), Antonio Mellino (*Agostino, the 'Mad'*), Tom Felleghy (*Colonel Steve Slater*), Franco Ressel (*purchaser of aural porn*).

Richard and Ingrid, two 'liberated' British hippies, travel to Scandinavia to buy pornography, which they then sell in Italy. They soon spend all the profits and resort to creating their own 'dirty pictures' (Richard takes snaps of Ingrid naked). But they are caught in Pisa and end up fleeing from the authorities. While attempting to 'borrow' petrol from a car parked in the garage of a luxurious villa they are interrupted by a middle-aged woman. Although initially enraged, she suddenly changes tack and invites them in. She is revealed to be Barbara, the wife of a NATO colonel. Sexual games ensue and the youngsters unwittingly become embroiled in a murder plot...

There is more to this nihilistic tale than meets the eye. Without revealing too much, it's fair to note that Papas' scheming character is more than just a victim. Although at one point she does seem victimised, she re-asserts her posi-

tion by the film's cynical conclusion. And the fact that Papas (a highly-respected actress) is an ordinary looking middle-aged woman - rather than a 'stunner' - actually adds a touch of reality to the unbelievable plot and sexual jealousies on show (although Lenzi has complained about her unwillingness to shoot a threesome scene). This makes Lovelock's character Richard seem even more of a chancer, unlike his cute idealist partner who seems willing to go along with most things. The interplay between the three protagonists is engaging and there are some genuinely tense moments along the way. The Italian version also includes an effective sequence in an aviary in which Papas repeatedly lunges at Lovelock with a knife, but this was inexplicably absent from the Dutch release. Only a few early scenes, such as when the hippies undertake their own peace demonstration in a restaurant or hook up with carefree (but dishonest) gypsies, seem like unnecessary distractions. Unfortunately, a song called *How*

Can You Live Your Life?, which comes in several different versions, including one sung by Lovelock over the opening titles and a sitar-tinged mix to accompany Muti's flirtation with Indian garb, threatens to overwhelm the proceedings. You would have thought that, having deliberately used aural torture in his *Orgasmo/Paranoia*, the director would have avoided such overkill.

Video:

France: MPM/DGD; VSD 2000 - as **Meurtre par interim**.

Holland: Delta Video - full screen except for opening credits, English language, Dutch subtitles as **Un posto ideale per uccidere**; New York Video - 80m 13s, full screen except for opening credits, English language, Dutch subtitles as **Un posto ideale per uccidere**.

Italy: CVR Realvision - as **Un posto ideale per uccidere**.

USA: T&A Video - as **Dirty Pictures**.



L'OCCHIO DIETRO LA PARETE

The Eye Behind the Wall'
Regarde intime (France 'Intimate Looks')
Coeur pervers (France: video sleeve title 'Perverse Voyeur')
 Italy Vistavision Technospes 90m (?)
 Production Company: Cinemondial
 Director, Story and Screenplay: Giuliano Petrelli
 Producers: Enzo Gallo, Carlo Policreti
 Cinematography: Cristiano Pogany
 Editor: Gian Maria Messeri
 Art Director: Franco Vanorio
 Music: Pippo Caruso with extracts by Chopin
 Assistant Director: Walter Italic
 Cast: John Phillip Law (*Arturo*), Fernando Rey (*Arturo's brother*), José Quaglio (*Ottavio, a servant*), Olga Biserà (*Olga*), Joseph Jenkins (*black dancer*), Roberto Posse (*Olga's brother*), Enzo Robutti.

Arturo, a writer, has developed a system of electronic telescopes and microphones to spy on his neighbour. The crippled writer encourages his wife Olga to watch the fit young man exercise naked and have his first gay encounter with a well-built black guy. As their voyeuristic past-time becomes more obsessive, Arturo prompts Olga to introduce herself to Arturo and they soon have fervent sex. Unfortunately, Arturo has an uncontrollable urge to kill and Olga's true identity is finally revealed...

L'occhio dietro la parete is a bizarre oddity which explores the delights and dangers of voyeurism (a staple theme in exploitation cinema). The film opens with a pre-credits shock cut aboard a speeding train. John Phillip Law's character is fixated by a young woman's short skirt and white leather boots. Unable to control himself, he suddenly lunges over and wrestles her whilst dragging down her panties! Before you can say **Late Night Trains** the scene cuts abruptly to a sedate credits sequence showing Olga Biserà playing the piano. A twisted sub-plot reveals the perverse antics of Ottavio, Ivano's servant (José Quaglio, who played a sexual deviant in *Who Saw Her Die?*), who spies on his mistress and demonstrates his love/hate for her by worshipping - and stabbing - a crude idol (comprising of her photo and underwear) he has secreted in his wardrobe. She even catches him fondling some pubic hair she left in the bath. Having been admonished he (naturally!) turns to teenage girls instead. But this warped take on Hitchcock's *Rear Window* is not all depravity. It has some surprisingly potent moments, such as when Arturo and Olga finally get it together. As she willingly abandons herself - revealing all her pent up sexual frustration - her tortured husband can hardly bring himself to watch or listen. His self-inflicted mental anguish is heightened by flashbacks which reveal that his wife is actually... hmmm, better not spoil this perverse disclosure. Pippo Caruso's classical score forcefully augments the sexual congress and the tragic fiery finale. Like Nico Mastorakis' jaw-dropping *Island of Death*, by combining recent production values with incredible bad taste, this curious film elevates itself to a status above the level of most trash.

Video:
 Belgium and France: American Video - 75m 39s, letterboxed as **Regarde intime** with sleeve title **Coeur pervers**.
 France: Hollywood Video - with sleeve title **Coeur pervers**.
 Italy: GVR General Video Recording; AVO Film - letterboxed.

Soundtrack:
 Italy: Cinevox LP with twelve tracks.

OLGA O'S STRANGE STORY

La strana storia di Olga "O"
 1995 Italy Agfa Telecolor 98m
 Production Company: Real Film S.r.l.
 Director: Antonio Bonifacio
 Producer: Remo Angioli
 Story: Ernesto Gastaldi
 Screenplay: Daniele Stroppa, Maria Cociani



Suggestive French artwork for 'One on Top of the Other'

Cinematography: Luigi Kuveiller
 Editor: Adriano Tagliavia
 Art Director: Maurizio Leonardi
 Music: Marco Rossetti
 Cast: Serena Grandi (*Olga Roli*), Stephan Ferrara (*Inspector Michael Manning*), Daniela Poggi (*Isabelle*), David Brandon (*Paolo Roli*), Dobromir Manev (*Olga's psychiatrist*), Fabrizia Flanders, Slava Ranceva, Letizia Raco, Annamaria Petrova, Florinda Bolkan (*Sheila Altman*).

Olga, a nightclub singer, has nightmares in which she finds her naked mother covered in blood, shoots her father (disguised in a ski mask) and then puts the gun to her own head. Her psychiatrist traces the disturbing dreams back to the suicide of her father, for which she feels guilty. Olga returns to the small town where she grew up and is soon haunted by past memories. While visiting the club where she used to perform, she is nearly run down by a motorcyclist and receives threatening 'phone calls. She inadvertently manages to track her oppressor down but when Inspector Manning, her ex-lover, turns up the thug is dead. Because his penis has been chopped off, it appears as if Olga has taken her own personal revenge... "Dreams are a way of punishing yourself, a way of feeding your sense of guilt" - this quote is indicative of this *giallo's* overtly-Freudian plot (as a teenager, Olga witnessed her father having sex with one of her school friends). Containing numerous red herrings, *Olga O* is a

throwback to the best Seventies thrillers. The black-clad motorcyclist who terrorises the heroine is reminiscent of murderers in *Strip Nude For Your Killer* and *What Have They Done To Your Daughters?* and even that staple automobile, the VW Beetle, makes an appearance. Unfortunately, these similarities are just that, and it's the fact that *Olga O* is so obviously an echo of the golden age of *gialli* which makes it so frustrating. Serena Grandi, previously in Lamberto Bava's *Delirium* (which coincidentally featured David Brandon), is a perfectly acceptable heroine-victim figure but she fails to ignite the screen the way that Edwige Fenech and other previous Euro-starlets did. And it's not because, except for one brief flash of breast, she keeps her clothes on throughout the film. Although Brandon is generally a welcome thesp, he is no substitute for suave male leads like Jean Sorel or George Hilton. Nevertheless, mention must go to supporting players Daniela Poggi, who delivers an excellent performance as a scheming bitch, and Florinda Bolkan, who is always interesting, whatever film she appears in. Antonio Bonifacio, formerly an assistant director on films such as *Ghosthouse*, has made three *gialli* - the others being the sexually provocative *Scandal in Black* and the quirky *Il delitto di Via Monti Parioli*. Despite an occasional flair, *Olga O* suffers from a downbeat look, mainly attributable to its small town Eastern European setting (Hungary?) and the fact that, like most low budget productions nowadays, it



Spanish artwork for 'One on Top of the Other'

wasn't shot in 'scope. Marco Rossetti's dancey synth themes are the final indicator that this film is a generation apart from its precursors but at least his score is more amenable than most other recent efforts.

Video:

Italy: Deltavideo - 93m 55s, full screen as *La strana storia di Olga "O"*.

ONE ON TOP OF THE OTHER

Una sull'altra

Perversion Story (France: theatrical title)

La machination (Belgium and France: video re-title 'The Frame-Up')

Nackt uber leichen (Germany 'Naked On Top of the Corpse')

Una historia perversa (Spain 'A Perverse History')

1969 Italy/France Technicolor Techniscope 99m

Production Company: Fida Cinematografica (Rome)/Les Productions Jacques Roitfeld (Paris)/C.C. Trebol Film (Paris)

Director: Lucio Fulci

Producer: Edmondo Amati

Story: Roberto Gianviti, Lucio Fulci

Screenplay: Lucio Fulci, Roberto Gianviti, José Luis Martínez Molla

Cinematography: Alejandro Ulloa

Editor: Ornella Micheli

Art Directors: Roman Calatayud, Nedo Azzini

Music and Music Director: Riz Ortolani

Assistant Directors: Max [Massimo] Castellani, Alvin Cocco

Cast: Marisa Mell (*Susan Dumurrier/Monica Weston*), Jean Sorel (*Doctor George Dumurrier*), Elsa Martinelli (*Jane*), John Ireland (*Inspector Ward*), Alberto De Mendoza (*Henry Dumurrier*), Jean Sobiesky (*Larry, the photographer*), George [Jorge] Rigaud (*Arthur Mitchell, an attorney*), Bill Vanders (*insurance agent*), John Douglas [Giuseppe Addobbati] (*Mr. Brent*), Faith Domergue (*Martha*), Riccardo Cucciolla (*Benjamin Wormser*), Jesus Puente (*Sergeant Rodriguez*), Franco Balducci (*Loveday, a cop*), Felix De Fauce (*Royal Insurance official*).

Uncredited Cast: Lucio Fulci (*handwriting expert*), Bobby Rhodes (*friendly prison guard*), Geoffrey Copleston (*District Attorney*).

Brothers George and Henry Dumurrier run an exclusive clinic in San Francisco. George's brunette wife Susan has a serious asthma condition and while he is away with his mistress Jane, she dies. George is the sole beneficiary of a two million dollar insurance policy so is investigated by the company. An anonymous

phone call leads George and Jane to the Roaring 20's nightclub where they meet a blonde go-go dancer called Monica, who bears an uncanny resemblance to Susan. George is perplexed but nonetheless intrigued and finds himself drawn into a relationship with Monica. However, the stripper is subsequently arrested by the police and admits that she was hired to pose as Susan. The dead woman's body, partially decomposed and unrecognisable, is exhumed and found to contain traces of poison...

Although it shares some themes with the same year's *Double Face* (for which Fulci shares story credit), *One On Top of the Other* is altogether slicker affair. A psychedelia-tinged exploration of paranoia (Sorel is the male victim seen in a number of *gialli*), *One on Top...* benefits from distinctive art direction, playful camera work and superb scope compositions (including split screens). Riz Ortolani's cool, jazzy score breezes in and out of the film adding depth to what might have seemed a trick-ridden Hitchcockian plot augmented by a catalogue of glossy images. The director's penchant for provocative imagery leads him to include a shot of a partly decomposed corpse and lots of naked female flesh. Jean Sorel and Marisa Mell are both excellent in roles that really require them to act. This is a *giallo* which rests on top of many others.

Video:

Belgium and France: Proserpine Video - 83m 31s, slightly letterboxed as *La Machination*

Germany: Silwa Video - 86m 23s, letterboxed

Nackt Uber Leichen.

Italy: Mitel - full screen; Number One Video

Both releases as *Una sull'altra*.

UK: Inter-Ocean Video - 98m 44s, letterboxed 1:1.75:1 as *One On Top of the Other*.

Soundtrack:

Germany: Crippled Dick CD - *Beat at Cinecitta* this compilation includes three themes.

Italy: Gatto Nero CD - *Murder For Pleasure Giallo and Thriller Themes* - this compilation includes the title theme.

ORDER OF DEATH

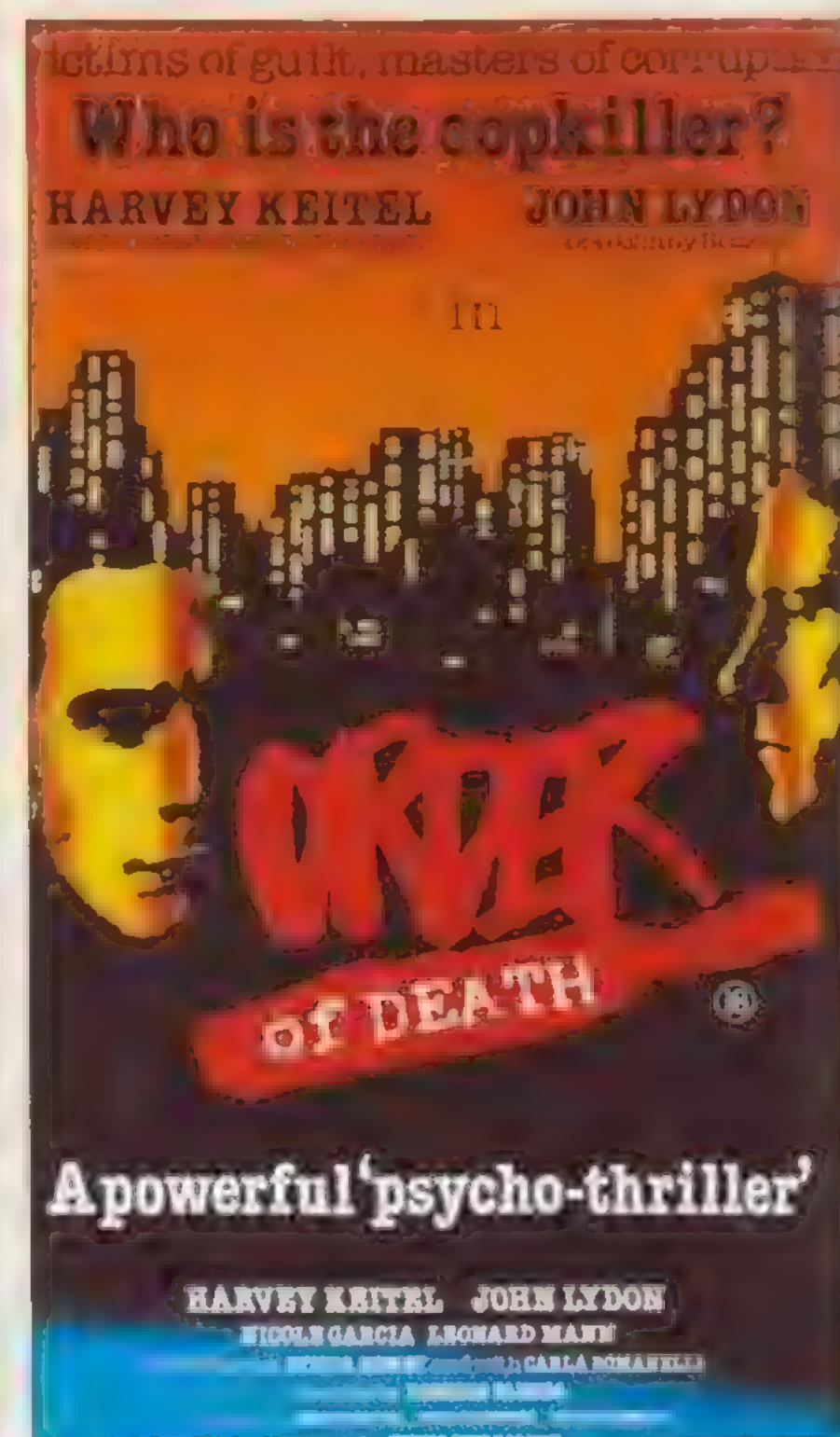
Copkiller

Copkiller - L'assassino dei poliziotti (Italy publicity title)

A couteau tire (France 'A Knife Cut')

Asesino de policias (Spain 'Killer of Police Corrupt' (USA and UK: alternate video release title)

1982 Italy colour LV (Luciano Vittori) scope 114 mins



Production Company: Jean Vigo S.r.l./R.A.I.
 Televisione Italiana/Aura Film
 Director: Roberto Faenza
 Screenplay: Elda Ferri
 Based on *The Order of Death* by Hugh Hood
 Executive Producers: Ennio De Concini, Roberto Faenza, Hugh Hood
 Photography: Giuseppe Pinori
 Editor: Bruno Baragli
 Music Director: Giantito Burchiellaro
 Music: Ennio Morricone
 Assistant Directors: Amy Werba, Isabel Cramer
 Executive Producer: Harvey Keitel (*Lieutenant Fred O'Connor*),
 John Lydon (*Leo Smith*), Nicole Garcia (*Lenore*),
 Leonard Mann (*Bob Corvo*), Sylvia Kauders (*Mrs Smith*),
 Carla Romanelli, Nicola Pignatelli, Ettore Venturini,
 Antonio Acciari, Benedetto Sestili, Giorgio Lucenti,
 Roberto Cecchetti, Niklaus Moras, Bob Kelly,
 Michael Meyer, Harriet Kurland, Paul Ragonese, Al
 Brand, Mike Tremont.

New York. An assassin wearing a police uniform murders cops from the city's drug squad. Meanwhile, Fred O'Connor is becoming increasingly paranoid about an expensive apartment which he and Bob, a fellow cop, bought with bribe money. Another murder is committed and a stranger, who calls himself Leo Smith, turns up at the secret apartment, claiming to be the cop killer. O'Connor realises this unwanted visitor is a threat, so ties him up in the bathroom until he can decide what to do. A radio report reveals his prisoner is from a rich background and a probable serial confessor. Bob returns to the flat and, in a rage, is accidentally knocked out. O'Connor orders Leo to cut Bob's throat, to make it look like the work of the cop killer. He then tries to shoot Leo, but he escapes. Bizarrely, he returns to the apartment the next day and, with O'Connor's mental state worsening, soon gains the upper hand. However, it still remains unclear who is the cop killer...

The offbeat offering tantalisingly presents an on-screen clash between two strong personalities: ex-Sex Pistol John Lydon and respected method actor Harvey Keitel. The result is enter-



Carroll Baker and Lou Castel take a shower in 'Paranoia'

taining and intriguing, with more than a touch of ambiguity. As in Nicolas Roeg's **Performance**, it's never clear which of the two protagonists is in control of the increasingly volatile situation or which of them might actually be responsible for the murder of cops. On first sight, it seems that Lydon was cast for novelty value; he certainly cannot act. However, reference to Hugh Hood's *The Order of Death*, an impressive study of obsession and paranoia from which the film was adapted, reveals that the sneering, but at times rather pathetic, punk is amazingly well cast because the *Public Image* he cultivates fits the book's description of the enigmatic Leo perfectly. It therefore becomes immaterial whether Lydon can emotive convincingly, because he is a Leo Smith himself. Smith seems to represent O'Connor's anonymous alter-ego, his anxiety

made real, and ultimately his guilty conscience. Each time that O'Connor mistreats Smith he punishes himself and the cathartic build-up to the inevitable blood-letting at the climax (a link with another Roeg film, **Don't Look Now**) is well-handled by Faenza. Moreover, the film benefits from a simple score by Morricone which adds a foreboding edge.

Video:

France: VIP - as **Copkiller**.
 Germany: Topstar/Polygram - as **Copkiller**.
 Italy: Videociak/Domovideo - letterboxed as **Copkiller**.
 Sweden: Trix - uncut, letterboxed as **Copkiller**.
 UK: Virgin - 96m 47s, full screen as **Order of Death**; Arrow Film - 101m 49s with a BBFC '18' certificate as **Corrupt**.
 USA: Thorn-EMI - as **Corrupt**; Rentertainment - as **Order of Death**.

Carroll Baker is subjected to psychological torture in 'Paranoia'





Edwige Fenech with a painted body in 'Perché.....Jennifer?'

PARANOIA

Orgasmo ('Orgasm')

Une folle envie d'amie (France 'The Mad Desire of Friends')

1968 Italy/France Technostampa

Eastmancolor Colorscope 91m

Production Company: Tritone Filmmindustria (Rome)/Societe Nouvelle de Cinematographie (Paris)

Director: Umberto Lenzi

Story: Umberto Lenzi

Screenplay: Ugo Moretti, Umberto Lenzi, Marie Claire Solleville

Cinematography: Guglielmo Mancori

Editor: Enzo Alabiso

Art Director: Giorgio Bertolini

Music: Piero Umiliani

Assistant Director: Marcello Pandolfi

Cast: Carroll Baker (*Catherine West*), Lou Castel (*Peter Donovan*), Colette Descombes (*Eva*), Lilla Brignone (*Teresa, the maid*), Tino Carraro (*Brian Sanders, Catherine's lawyer*), Franco Pesce (*Martino, Catherine's handyman*), Tina Lattanzi (*Catherine's aunt*), Jacques Stany [Stanislav] (*police inspector*), Sara Simoni, Gaetano Imbro, Calisto Tanzi, Alberto Cocchi, Maria Rosiello.

Following the death of her tycoon husband in a car crash, Catherine West inherits a fortune and takes refuge from the inquisitive press at a secluded mansion in Italy. Peter, an arrogant young man, arrives and soon seduces Catherine. Stressed by the pressure of their

tempestuous relationship, she starts drinking heavily and taking sedatives. Eva, Peter's sister, turns up at the mansion too. The trio begin partying and Catherine attempts to recapture her youth. Although initially aghast when she discovers Peter and Eva in bed together, she cannot resist involving herself in a threesome. She attempts to rebel against their "degenerate games" so the pair begin to blackmail her. Her mental torture continues as they deprive their "captive" of sleep and play a pop song repeatedly. She attempts to shoot Peter but he returns from the dead...

With its brazenly sexploitative original title, **Orgasmo/Paranoia** fittingly takes advantage of the relaxation of censorship in the late Sixties to show nudity and (implied) debauchery while revelling in the sadistic games on display. Indeed, the film was something of a cause célèbre in the US, due to Carroll Baker's nude scenes, and was given an 'X' rating. As this is a *giallo*, the major twist at the end comes as no surprise and it is easy to guess the identity of the young couple's collaborator. But, aided by Raul Ranieri's make-up - which presents her increasingly debilitated condition - Baker puts in an admirable performance. The film kick-started the second stage of her career and she became a regular star in Italian productions. She worked again with Lenzi in **A Quiet Place To Kill** (which can be easily confused with this film because its original Italian title is **Paranoia**) and **Knife of Ice**, before roles in sex dramas and comedies like **The Virgin**

Wife. The commonly seen version of **Orgasmo/Paranoia** (the one under review) is the re-edited American 'R' rated release, which has a different (less cynical) ending to the Italian original.

Video:

Australia: K&C - 84m 41s, full screen as **Paranoia**.

Belgium: International Duplicating Industries - 85m 30s (US 'R' rated version), letterboxed, taken from a slightly speckly print as **Paranoia**

Italy: label unknown - as **Orgasmo**.

UK: Videoform - 85m 10s: cut, full screen, as **Paranoia**.

USA: NTA - US 'R' rated versions, full screen as **Paranoia**.

PENSIONE PAURA

('Hotel Fear')

La violacion de la Senorita Julia (Spain 'The Rape of Senorita Julia')

1978 Italy/Spain Scopecolor 100m

Production Company: Aleph Cinematografica (Rome)/Alessandra Cine. (Madrid)

Director: Francesco Barilli

Story: Barbara Alberti, Amedeo Pagani

Screenplay: Barbara Alberti, Amedeo Pagani, Francesco Barilli

Cinematography: Gualtiero Manozzi

Editor: Amedeo Salfa

Music: Adolfo Waitzman

Cast: Leonora Fani [Eleonora Cristofani] (*Rosa*), Francisco Rabal, Luc Merenda (*Rodolfo*), Iole Fierro (*Rodolfo's lover*), Lidia Biondi (*Marta, Rosa's mother*), José María Prada, Massimo [Maximo] Valverde, Francesco Impeccati, Luigi De Santis, Carlo Totti.

1945: Rosa, an adolescent, helps run the family hotel while awaiting her father's return from the war. Following the murder of Marta, her mother, she is raped by two guests. However, they are subsequently hacked to death by a mysterious man in a hat and overcoat. While hiding the corpses in the basement, Rosa is forced to join in an orgy with the other guests but is finally saved when a stranger intervenes and shoots them all dead. He also disposes of the traitor in the attic. But there are further revelations...

Like Barilli's **The Perfume of the Lady in Black**, this is a well-observed study of repressed sexuality and psychosis. The director perfectly captures the stifling atmosphere and claustrophobic lifestyle the guests of the hotel are forced to endure. Leonora Fani, an underappreciated actress who died prematurely in a car crash, gives a solid performance as Rosa. Fani played an unfortunate woman on the receiving end of more male sexual abuse in the following year's **Giallo a Venezia**, a film with an entirely different agenda. Adolfo Waitzman (who?) contributes an excellent classical score which complements the sombre proceedings.

Video:

Italy: AVO Film - as **Pensione paura**.

PERCHÉ QUELLE STRANE GOCCE DI SANGUE SUL CORPO DI JENNIFER?

('Why Are Those Strange Drops of Blood on Jennifer's Body?')

Una strana orchidea con cinque gocce di sangue (Italy: shooting title 'A Strange Orchid With Five Drops of Blood')

Rendez-vous avec la mort (Belgium video title: 'Rendezvous with Death')

Les rendez-vous de Satan (France 'Satan's Rendezvous')

Quelques gouttes de sang sur le corps de Jennifer? (France)

Het Bloed van Jennifer (Holland 'The Blood of Jennifer')

Las lagrimas de Jennifer (Spain 'Jennifer's Tears')

Erotic Blue (UK: theatrical title)

The Case of the Bloody Iris (?)

1972 Italy Eastmancolor scope 94m

Belgian artwork implying that 'Perché...Jennifer?' is about satanism

Production Company: Galassia Film/Lea Film
 Director: Anthony Ascot (Giuliano Carnimeo)
 Producer: Luciano Martino
 Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi
 Cinematography: Stelvio Massi
 Editor: Eugenio Alabiso
 Director: Carlo Leva
 Music and Music Director: Bruno Nicolai
 Assistant Director: Michele Massimo Tarantini
 Edwige Fenech (Jennifer Osterman), George Hilton (Andrea Antinori), Paola Quattrini (Marilyn, Jennifer's friend), Giampiero Albertini (Inspector Erci), Franco Agostini (Red, Erci's assistant), Oreste Lionello (Arthur, the photographer), Ben Carra (Adam, Jennifer's husband), Carla Brait (Mizar Harrington), Gianni Paoletti, Carla Mancini, George [Jorge] Rigaud (Professor Isaacs, Sheena's father), Annabella Incontrera (Sheena Isaacs), Luciano Pigozzi (Mazzelli, a nightclub owner).

An attractive young woman is slashed to death in the lift of an apartment block. An exotic dancer, Mizar, discovers the body and is soon a victim herself (she is tied up and drowned in the bath). Having become friends with Andrea Antinori, the building's architect, two models - Jennifer and Marilyn - move into the deceased dancer's apartment. The police believe that Andrea is the killer. Meanwhile, Jennifer is being harassed by Adam, her former partner. After being attacked in her bedroom by the suspected murderer, Jennifer seeks refuge in her neighbour's apartment. The good samaritan, Sheena, turns out to be a lesbian who lives with her violin-playing father. Returning to Jennifer's apartment, the women discover a bloodstained orchid and Adam's body. Later, Marilyn is stabbed to death in a busy street. Andrea, who happens to be there, gets covered in her blood and goes into hiding. Meanwhile, Jennifer is suspicious of her other neighbour, a sour-faced woman called Mrs Moss, who takes comic books called 'Killer Man' into her apartment...

In the early Seventies, the *giallo* had become canonically linked with the horror genre. Here, the proverbial old dark house is replaced by a seamy new apartment block but the essence of the plot is still the same. There is also that other horror standby: a disfigured madman locked away from view. Producer Luciano Martino was adept at turning out slick, sexy thrillers (usually helmed by his brother Sergio) and this vehicle for Fenech, his mistress at the time, is no exception. For this outing, the director's reins were given over to Giuliano



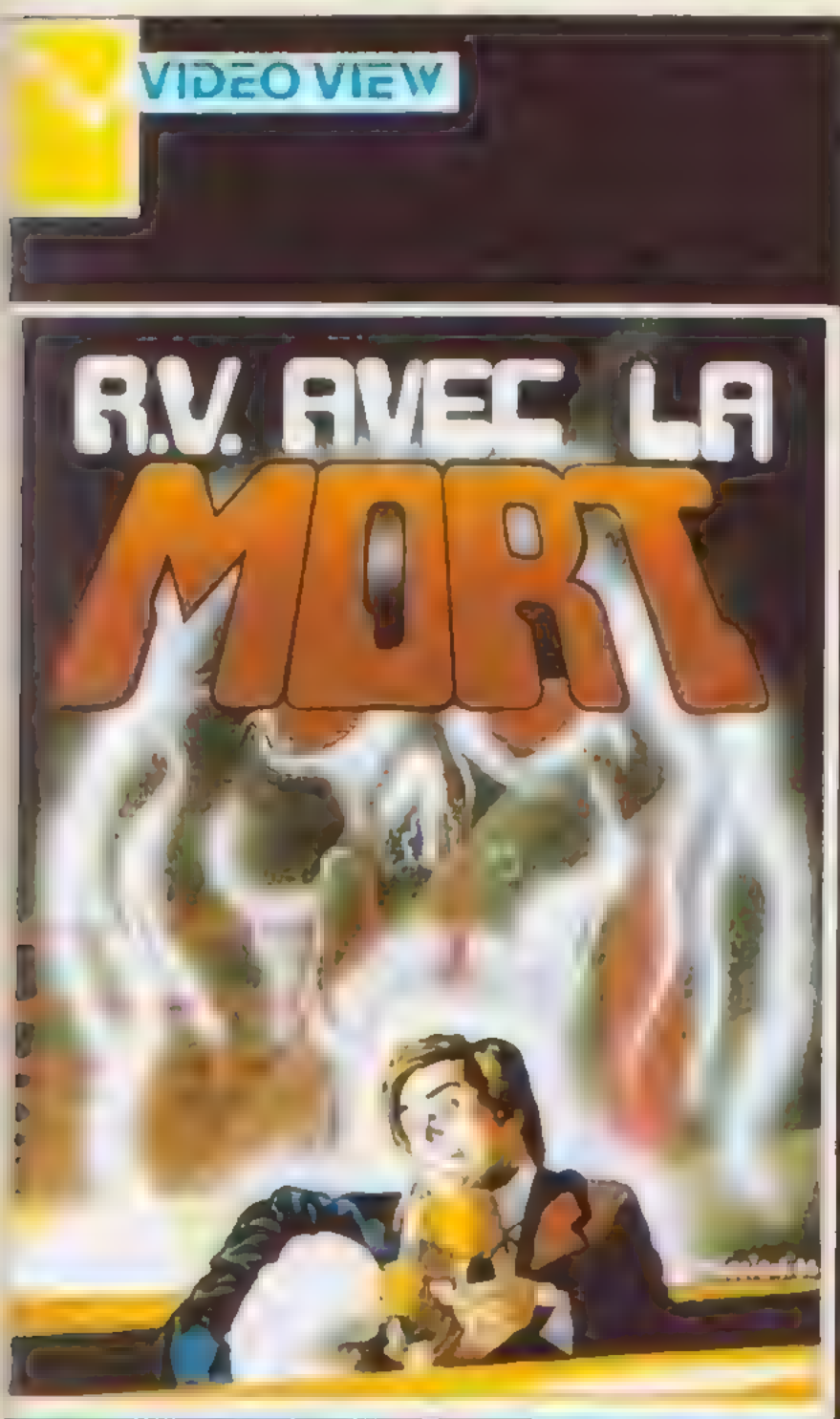
Carnimeo, best known for his Sartana westerns, and the resulting visuals are a testament to his eye for striking imagery. The rest of the team ensure that this noteworthy killer feature possesses all the right components: future director of trash *gialli* Stelvio Massi (*Five Women For the Killer*; *Black Angel*) competently handles the crisp photography; Eugenio Alabiso (a regular collaborator with Sergio Martino) handles the editing; and (another) soon to be director, Michele Massimo Tarantini, fills the assistant director's shoes; while Bruno Nicolai's score is easily one of the best genre pieces. More importantly, Gastaldi's screenplay is a perfect synthesis of what most people expect from a *giallo*: this whodunnit is laced with copious amounts of nudity and intermittent violence, while the requisite red herrings include Pigozzi as the owner of a Pop Art nightclub, Woody Allen lookalike Oreste Lionello as a camp photographer; and Jennifer's jealous ex-lover who previously involved her in 'free love' orgies (an excuse for yet more naked flesh). Mild humour is derived from the antics of the philatelist police inspector (at one point he exclaims out loud, having apparently found an important clue but it turns out to be a rare stamp!) and his dim-witted sidekick. Even Jennifer's flatmate Marilyn gets in on the act when she jokingly pretends to have been drowned in the bath where the former tenant expired. All in all, Jennifer is a prime example of the genre and should be sought out at all costs.

Video:
 Belgium: Video View - 90m 34s, letterboxed,

French language with small Dutch subtitles as *Rendez-vous avec la mort*. There is heavy print damage during reel changes but the colours are brighter than in a print shown on Italian TV.
 France: DEC - as *Les rendez-vous de Satan*.
 Italy: GVR General Video Recording - letterboxed as *Perché' quelle strane gocce di sangue sul corpo di Jennifer?*

PERFECT CRIME

Indagine su un delitto perfetto
 ('Investigation of a Perfect Crime')
The Perfect Crime (video sleeve title)
Un delitto perfetto (shooting title 'A Perfect Crime')
 1978 Italy Stacofilm Cinemascope 92m
 Production Company: C.L.C. (Coop. Lavorat. Cinematografica)
 Director: Aaron Leviathan (Giuseppe Rosati)
 Producer: Ferruccio Mosca
 Story and Screenplay: Aaron Leviathan (Giuseppe Rosati), Giuseppe Pulieri, based on the novel *Infernale Week-end a Cedak House*
 Cinematography: Jerry Delaware
 Editor: Frank Robertson (Franco Fraticelli)
 Art Director: Robert Frogs (Roberto Ranucci)
 Music: Carlo Savina
 Special Effects: Armando Grilli
 Cast: Gloria Guida (Alice/Nurse Polly Rennie), Leonard Mann (Leonardo Manzella) (Sir Paul De Revere), Joseph Cotten (Sir Arthur Dundee), Adolfo Celi (Sir Harold Boyd), Anthony Steele (Inspector Jeff Hawks), Alida Valli (Lady Clementine De Revere), Janet Agren (Lady Gloria Boyd), Paul Muller (Gibson, De Revere's





butler), Franco Ressel (*Sergeant Phillips*), Anthony Freeman (Mario Novelli) (*assassin*), Claudio Gora (*lawyer*), Elia Stefanizzi.

Sir Ronald Selmer, the president of an international conglomerate, is killed when his private jet blows up as a result of sabotage. Sir Harold Boyd is very keen to be the conglomerate's new president but his aspirations are hampered by opposition from Sir Paul De Revere, a young racing driver, and Sir Arthur Dundee, an aged businessman with a heart condition. Sir Arthur plans to kill Harold using Polly (an attractive accomplice), who is going to give him a lethal injection at the moment he climaxes. But another death intervenes: whilst driving to

Yorkshire to see his mother, Paul is involved in a fatal road accident. Another relation, Inspector Jeff Hawks of Scotland Yard, is called in to investigate his cousin's death... Many *gialli* seek to exploit the enduring fascination with 'the perfect crime' and none more so than this Agatha Christie-style whodunnit. Unfortunately, like his preposterous pseudonym (Aaron Leviathan!), Giuseppe Rosati's tall tale is an unconvincing affair. While all the thrillers discussed in this book demand a certain suspension of disbelief (especially those that involve supernatural events), **Perfect Crime** over-confidently offers a basic premise which is simply untenable. The first murder - of an internationally important figure in a world business organisation, rendered by an exploding model aircraft - is never investigated and dismissed as an accident. From this alarmingly casual opening, the film's central conceit - which cannot be revealed here - has major flaws which can be discerned by even the most inattentive armchair detective. The film falls over itself trying to be too 'English' (fox hunting, diplomatic butlers, visits to Scotland Yard and numerous cups of tea). Top-billed sexbomb Gloria Guida is also shamefully underused. Despite these weaknesses, there is a certain amount of pleasure to be derived from the Machiavellian games being played out on screen, and the sight of Joseph Cotton's pompous character attempting to cut out his pacemaker is a moment to savour.

Video:

Greece: Cinehollywood - as **Perfect Crime**. Italy: CVR Realvision - letterboxed, in a cardboard sleeve as **Indagine su un delitto perfetto**; Cinehollywood - 88m 37s full screen and letterboxed versions as **Indagine su un delitto perfetto**. Includes extra shots of London at start.

Japan: Family Video Theatre - full screen as **Perfect Crime** with sleeve **The Perfect Crime**.

Sweden: Walthers - 88m 51s, slightly letterboxed, Swedish subtitles, dark transfer, hissy sound as **Perfect Crime**.

UK: VPD - 88m 47s, letterboxed as **Perfect Crime**; Mercury - as **Perfect Crime**.

The rare soundtrack single cover for *'The Perfume of the Lady in Black'*



Greek video sleeve for *'The Perfume of the Lady in Black'*

USA: Vid America - as **Perfect Crime**.

THE PERFUME OF THE LADY IN BLACK

Il profumo della signora in nero (The Perfume of the Lady in Black')

1974 Italy Technicolor 105m

Production Company: Euro International Films

Director: Francesco Barilli

Producer: Giovanni Bertolucci

Story and Screenplay: Francesco Barilli, Massimo D'Avack

Cinematography: Mario Masini

Editor: Enzo Micarelli

Art Director: Franco Velchi

Music and Music Director: Nicola Piovani

Assistant Director: Giorgio Scotton

Cast: Mimsy Farmer (*Silvia Hacherman*), Maurizio Bonuglia (*Roberto*), Mario Scaccia (*Rossetti*), Jho Jhenkins (*Harry*), Nike Arrighi, Daniela Barnes, Alexandra Paizi, Renata Zamengo, Ugo Carboni, Roberta Cadringer, Sergio Forcina, Gabriele Bentivoglio, Luigi Antonio Guerra, Carla Mancini, Donna Jordan (*Francesca*), Orazio Orlando (*Nicola*).

Silvia Hacherman, an industrial scientist, becomes increasingly disturbed by a series of apparently supernatural visitations. In fact, she is hallucinating. Her visions include a seductive woman who appears when she is about to make love with her boyfriend Roberto, and a young girl who becomes a seemingly constant companion. And, as her psychosis begins to take hold, even neighbours, friends and Roberto, her lover, begin to take on sinister significance. It transpires that as a child Silvia pushed her mother off a balcony to her death. She becomes increasingly violent and also ends up falling to her death. However, her entire descent into madness and her (accidental?) demise seem to have been orchestrated. **The Perfume of the Lady in Black** skilfully details the increasingly irrational behaviour of its central female protagonist. From the opening shot of a colour-tinted photograph of a young girl looking up awkwardly at her father the theme of familial tension is established. A series of flashbacks reveal that the film is yet another exploration of Freud's primal scene scenario. But this is not just a case study of psychotic behaviour. There is a suggestion that her downfall has somehow been pre-arranged as part of a supernatural plot. So the shocking climax is pre-figured by an earlier discussion about witch-doctors, black magic and human sacrifices and an incident in which Andy, an



Dutch video sleeve for 'Phantom of Death'

...can professor, sucks the blood from her and. All this is reminiscent of **Rosemary's Baby** (especially Silvia's seemingly innocent but evil old neighbour). But whether the tragic heroine's plight was indeed caused by devilry or it just happened that her mental illness was used upon as part of a conspiracy is immaterial. Like any nightmare, the film exists in its own menacing world and defies any definite interpretation. More importantly, it's beautifully lit and directed, and no review can fail to mention Nicola Piovani's haunting score, which is quite exquisite. Farmer, who played a character suffering hallucinations in **The Victim** the same year, gives the performance of her career.

Video:

Release: Sunrise - 99m 53s, letterboxed, English language, Greek subtitles as **The Perfume of the Lady in Black**.

Soundtrack:

Beat single with two tracks; Beat CD - on a double-bill with Piovani's score for the comedy **Bertoldo, Bertoldino e Cacasenno**.

PHANTOM OF DEATH

Un delitto poco comune ('An Uncommon Crime')

Le tueur de la pleine lune (France 'The Full Moon Killer')

Off Balance - Der Tod Wartet in Venedig

Germany 'Off Balance - The Dead Wait in Venice')

Off Balance (Holland)

Bestia asesina (Spain 'Bestial Killer')

Squilibrio (production title 'Unbalanced')

The House on Percival Rubens Street

(export production title)

An Unusual Murder (alternate export production title)

Italy Kodak LV (Luciano Vittori) Dolby Stereo 95m

Production Company: Globe Films S.r.l./Tandem Cinematografica S.r.l./D.M.V. Distribuzione S.r.l. in association with Reteitalia S.p.A.

Director: Ruggero Deodato

Producer: Pietro Innocenzi

Story: Gianfranco Clerici, Vincenzo Mannino

Screenplay: Gianfranco Clerici, Vincenzo Mannino, Gigliola Battaglini

Cinematography: Giorgio Di Battista

Editor: Daniele Alabiso

Art Director: Paolo Innocenzi

Music: Pino Donaggio

Music Director: Natale Massara

Assistant Director: Roberto Tatti

Cast: Michael York (*Robert Dominici*), Edwige Fenech (*Helene Martell*), Donald Pleasence (*Inspector Daddi*), Mapi Galan (*Suzanna*), Fabio Sartor (*David*), Renato Cortesi (*Mikey*), Antonella Ponziani (*Gloria*), Carola Stagnaro (*Doctor Carla Pesenti*), Daniele Brado (*Doctor Vanni*), Caterina Boratto (*Robert's mother*), Lewis Eduardo Ciannelli (*examining doctor*), Renata Dal Pozzo (*Corsi*), Giovanni Lombardo Radice (*Giuliano, a priest*), Gianni Franco, Marino Mase' (*ageing expert*), Achille Brugnini, Giovanni Tamberi (*Andrea*), Loris Loddi (*Daniel, a cop*), Hal Yamanouchy [*Haruhiko Yamanouchi*] (*Robert's Kendo instructor*), Diego Verdegiglio, Raffaella Baracchi, Emi Valentino. Uncredited Cast: Ruggero Deodato (*man waiting at train station*).

A young female doctor is stabbed to death by a killer wielding a sword. Susanna, the attractive partner of Robert Dominici, a successful classical pianist, is slain at a railway station. Robert soon begins a relationship with Elaine, an old friend, and she becomes pregnant. While returning from a sojourn with his mother in Venice, Robert reacts violently when a man jokes about him losing his hair. He attends a private clinic where a doctor confirms that he has a rare disease which causes him to appear prematurely aged. The onslaught of the disease twists his mind and compels him to kill a prostitute and a young policewoman.

Unfairly dismissed by those who only wanted Deodato to come up with another **Cannibal Holocaust**, this austere horror/giallo hybrid has an agreeably **Off Balance** story, a strong cast of seasoned performers and, in its uncut form, some choice moments of gore. Indeed, some of Clerici and Mannino's basic plot elements - such as the killer who disguises his voice and taunts the helpless police inspector by 'phone - were derived from the story used as the basis for **The New York Ripper**. Even before the opening credits have finished, a young woman is graphically butchered. The gush of blood which erupts from her neck wound will be welcomed by gorehounds bored by the diminishing amount of viscera on view in most late Eighties productions (it's also repeated via a flashback). Minutes later, following an in-joke appearance by the director, another fountain of the red stuff is discharged when a woman's head is forced through a glass window pane after she is stabbed with a sword (recalling **Phenomena**). Other slices of mayhem include a beheading and a relatively bloodless throat slashing. But violence is not the only attraction in this unexpectedly thoughtful production. It's a pleasure to see former *giallo* queen Fenech screaming again, whilst Pleasence is great as the police inspector - who begins his investigation a quiet-spoken

man looking forward to his retirement and ends up shouting frustrated abuse at his nemesis. Like Jeff Goldblum in **The Fly**, York has to effectively convey his character's physical and mental disintegration and he gives a creditable performance. Having made amends for the insulting **Body Count** with this entertaining offering, Deodato unfortunately came up with another wrong number the following year with the disappointing **Dial: Help**.

Video:

Germany: Topstar/Polygram - as **Off Balance - Der Tod wartet in Venedig**.

Holland, Belgium: Jaguar Video - 88m 08s, full screen, English language, Dutch subtitles as **Off Balance**.

Italy: AVO Film - as **Un delitto poco comune**.

UK: Trans Global Pictures - 87m 29s, BBFC '18' certificate: cut by 18 seconds, with two different sleeve designs as **Phantom of Death** and **Off Balance**.

USA: Vidmark - as **Phantom of Death**.

PHENOMENA**Creepers**

1984 Italy Technicolor Panavision Dolby stereo 121m

Production Company: Dacfilm (Rome)

Director: Dario Argento

Producer: Dario Argento

Screenplay: Dario Argento, Franco Ferrini

Cinematography: Romano Albani

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Art Directors: Maurizio Garrone, Nello Giorgetti, Luciano Spadoni, Umberto Turco

Music: Bill Wyman (*Valley*; *Valley Bolero*), Iron

Maiden (*Flash of the Blade*), Motorhead

(*Locomotive*), Andi Sex Gang (*The Naked and*

the Dead; *You Don't Know Me*), Simon Boswell

(*The Maggots*), Claudio Simonetti

(*Phenomena*), Fabio Pignatelli (*The Insects*)

Special Effects: Sergio Stivaletti and the

Corridori Brothers

Special optical effects: Luigi Cozzi

First Assistant Director: Michele Soavi

Cast: Jennifer Connelly (*Jennifer Corvino*),

Daria Nicolodi (*Mrs Bruckner*), Dalila Di Lazzaro

(*headmistress*), Donald Pleasence (*Doctor John*

McGregor), Patrick Bachau (*Inspector Rudolf*

Geiger), Fiore Argento (*Vera Brandt, first*

victim), Sophie Burchier (*schoolgirl*), Paola

Gropper (*schoolgirl*), Ninke Hielkema (*school-*

girl), Mitzy Orsini (*schoolgirl*), Federica

Mastroianni (*Sophie*), Fiorenza Tessari, Alberto

Cracco, Gaspare Capparoni, Mario Donatone,

Antonio Maimone, Davide Marotta (*Patau*),

Fulvio Mingozzi, Francesca Ottaviani, Michele

Soavi (*policeman*), Franco Trevisi, Fausta Avelli,

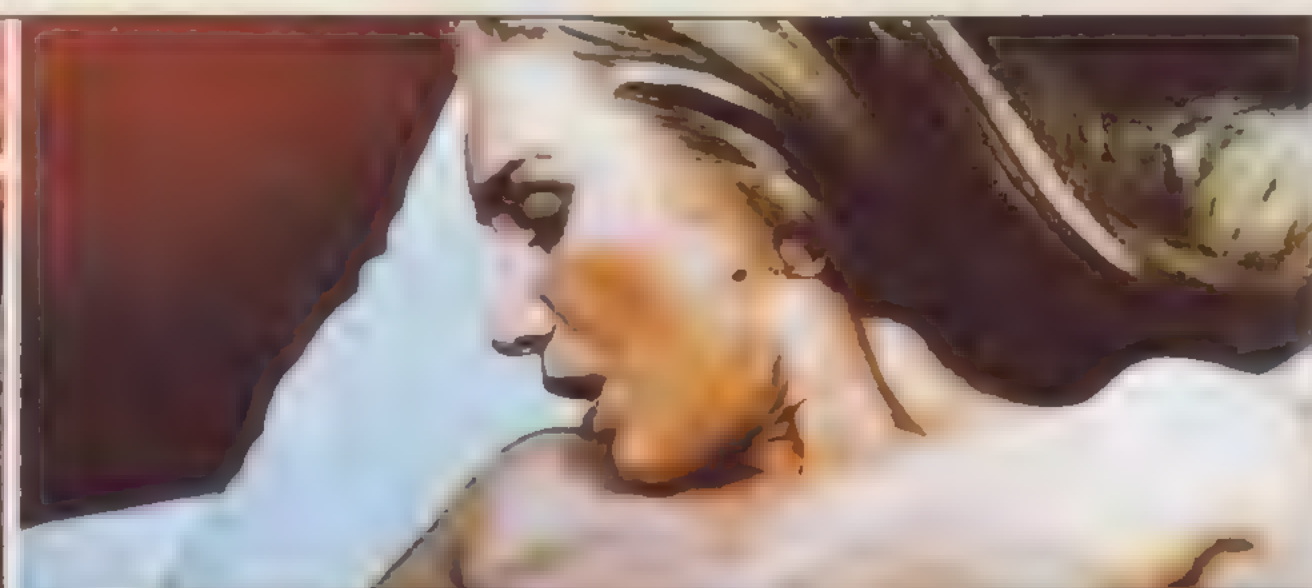
Franca Berdini, Marta Biuso, Marisa Simonetti,

Geraldine Thomas (*schoolgirls*).









ARMANDO NOVELLI presenta

ANNAMARIA RIZZOLI · RAY LOVELOCK

PLAY MOTEL

con MARIO CUTINI · ANTONELLA ANTINORI · PATRICIA BEN · ENZO FISICHELLA
MARINA FRAJESE · ANTHONY FREEMAN · MARINO MASE · PATRIZIA WEEBLY
VITTORIO RIPAMONTI · BOB BALISTERI con ANTHONY STEFFEN
regia di ROY GARRETT

A teenage tourist is left stranded in a remote Swiss valley. She seeks assistance at a nearby house and is promptly butchered by an unseen killer. The police enlist the aid of wheelchair-bound Doctor John McGregor, an entomologist. Meanwhile, an American teenager named Jennifer Corvino, enrolls at the exclusive finishing school located in the valley. Jennifer is revealed to have a bizarre empathy with insects. One night, while sleepwalking, Jennifer sees another girl being murdered. She ends up at Doctor McGregor's house and they become friends. The school authorities are unhappy about Jennifer's unusual powers but McGregor encourages her to use them to reveal the killer's identity. Unfortunately, the doctor is killed and Jennifer, aided by McGregor's trained chimpanzee, is even more determined to find the person responsible...

My initial viewing of this seemingly silly film (with a bewildered audience in an insultingly small London cinema complex - actually Cannon, Panton Street, because the guilty should be named) left me slightly embarrassed, and deeply disappointed. After the majesty of *Inferno* and *Tenebrae*, one of my favourite directors seemed to have lost control and all sense of balance. Everything about the film seemed ill-conceived, overblown and just plain ridiculous. Thankfully, repeated viewings have cast new perspectives on this insane, but surprisingly lyrical movie. Because once you have recovered from the shock of the kitchen-sink plot, with its sleepwalking, insect-friendly heroine, razor-brandishing chimpanzee, and deformed offspring, the possibilities of a cinematic experience which unfolds as illogically as a real nightmare begin to dawn. And there are some amazing images and truly revolting moments of horror to be found in this maggot-ridden dreamworld. This is a film which has to be seen more than once. Like the soundtrack's eclectic mixture of themes, typified by Claudio Simonetti's title piece (a frenetic mélange of synth rock and operatic female vocals), what initially seems like an awful concept soon begins to exert a strange allure. Unfortunately, no amount of re-viewing can convince me that using a typically driving Motorhead track as an

aural background to Pleasence's dead character being taken away is anything but a misconceived idea. Elsewhere, Connelly's cutesy performance is as stomach-churning as the maggoty hellhole she finds herself trapped in, Daria Nicolodi's school-marm is a complete non-starter and Patrick Bachau gives a truly comatose performance as the police inspector investigating the murders. But casting and directing actors has never been one of Argento's strong points. In purely conventional cinematic terms *Phenomena* fails miserably but its (unintentionally absurd) combination of bizarre images and themes, plus the main score (try to ignore the two heavy metal intrusions) give this oddity an irrational appeal.

Video:

Australia: Palace Explosive - 105m 19s, full screen as **Creepers**.
Holland: EVC - 105m 15s, slightly letterboxed as **Phenomena**.
Italy: Mondadori Video - 111m 01s, full screen as **Phenomena**.
Sweden: Prisma Film and Video as **Phenomena**.
UK: Palace - 79m 31s: cut by 17 seconds with a BBFC '18' certificate as **Creepers**.
USA: Media - 83m 08s: cut, full screen as **Creepers**.

Laserdisc:

Japan: ABC - 116m 08s, full screen, Italian language, Japanese subtitles, Surround Sound, termed the 'integral hard' release as **Phenomena**. The disc includes an Italian trailer, pop music videos and a documentary *Dario Argento's World of Horror 3* directed by Luigi Cozzi.
USA: Roan Group

Soundtrack:

Italy: Cinevox LP and CD (and re-issue with extra tracks) - as **Phenomena**; Cinevox CD - *Argento Vivo* - This compilation contains *The Maggots* and *The Quick and The Dead*.
UK: Heavy Metal Worldwide LP and tape - as **Creepers**.

PLAY MOTEL

1979 Italy Eastmancolor Stacofilm 92m
Production Company: Midia Cinematografica
Director: Mario Gariazzo
Producer: Armando Novello
Story and Screenplay: Mario Gariazzo
Cinematography: Aldo Greci
Editor: Vincenzo Tomassi
Art Director: Francesco Cuppini
Music: Ubaldo Continiello
Assistant Director: Stelio Fiorenza
Cast: Ray Lovelock (*Roberto Vinci*), Anna Maria Rizzoli (*Patrizia*), Mario Cutini (*Rinaldo Cortes*), Antonella Antinori, Patricia Behn, Enzo Fisichella (*Massimo Genti*), Marina Frajese (*prostitute/first victim*), Anthony Freeman (*Mario Novelli*), Marina Mase', Patrizia Webley (*Patrizia Di Rossi*), Vittorio Ripamonti, Bob Balisteri, Bruno Di Luia, Franco Beltramme, Michele Zurlaro, Cesare Di Vito, Anthony Steffen (*Antonio De Tefé*) (*Max Liguori*).

The titular motel is the setting for an excuse to display as much naked female flesh and sex as the plot will allow. There's a blackmailer who photographs nude models during the daytime and spends his evenings snapping couples in the act. More importantly, this cinematic slush also features a black-gloved murderer. Some brief eyeball macros (as in *The Cat O' Nine Tails*) are the only clues to the killer's identity. *Play Motel* is enjoyable tosh from Mario Gariazzo, a master of such rudimentary nonsense. The *giallo* element definitely takes a back seat to the movie's real driving force: sex and more sex. But the erotic encounters are often light-hearted, for instance, the sight of a pantomime Devil cavorting with a whore in a nun's habit is hardly serious smut. Regular viewers of Italian trash cinema will recognise many of the cast, such as Enzo Fisichella and well-endowed blonde Patrizia Webley, who can also both be seen getting it together in the delightful *Malabimba*, Anthony Steffen (who seems thoroughly bored throughout), Ray Lovelock (a bit of a come-down for him), plus haggard hardcore queen Marina Frajese. There are also a couple of splendidly awful, although admittedly rather catchy, songs. The hardcore



Senta Berg
Umberto Orsi

LA TRANCHEUSE INFERNALE

The 'Infernal Chainsaw' used at the climax of 'Puzzle'

person includes a few brief shots of public bonding but these hardly add anything to the film's sleaze value. Producer Armando Novello is an old lag at the exploitation game, having produced another trash classic, **Slaughter Hotel**.

Video:
Italy: Kineo - soft version, full screen; label unknown - 90m 41s, hardcore version, letterboxed.

PLOT OF FEAR

E tanta paura ('Too Much Fear')
Magnum 45 - Ein Mann Jagt das Gesetz (Germany 'Magnum 45 - Somebody Hunts the Politician')
Terror infinito (Spain 'Infinite Terror')
Boody Peanuts (Sweden: video sleeve title)
1976 Italy Technicolor Vistavision 98m
Production Company: G.P.E. Enterprises/C.P.C.
Roma di Milano (Milan)

Director: Paolo Cavara
Producer: Ermanno Curti, Guy Luongo
Story and Screenplay: Bernardino Zapponi, Paolo Cavara in collaboration with Enrico Oldoini
Cinematography: Franco Di Giacomo
Editor: Sergio Montanari
Art Director: Franco Fumagalli
Music: Daniele Patucchi
Cast: Corinne Clery (*Jeanne*), Michele Placido (*Inspector Lorenzo Romei*), Quinto Parmeggiani (*Angelo Scanavini*), Eddy Fay (*Eduardo Fajeta*) (*Fulvio Colajanni*), John Steiner (*Hoffman*), Jacques Herlin (*ex-Inspector Pandolfi*), Cecilia Polizzi, Greta Vajan (*guest at Villa Hoffman*), Sarah Crespi (*Rosa Catena*), Sarah Ceccarini, Enrico Oldoini, Tom Skerritt (*chief inspector*), Eli Wallach (*Pietro Riccio*), Giorgio Gargiullo, Eleonora Vivaldi, Guidarino Guidi, Enzo Robutti, Mary Ruth League, Susy Radaelli, Danila Grassini, Bianca Toso, Claudio Zucchet, Mirella Giraldi.
In Milan, a middle-aged masochist is strangled

to death by a transvestite prostitute. That evening, on a bus, a woman is bashed to death with a spanner. Pictures from a book of fairy tales by Hoffman are left beside the victims. It emerges that the victims were members of an organisation called 'Wildlife Friends'. Frustrated by the police's lack of progress, Angelo Scanavini, a friend of the victims, goes to the Riccio security agency. He confesses that he believes the murders are connected with a party held four years earlier at Villa Hoffman (headquarters of the 'Wildlife Friends'), when a young prostitute, Rosa Catena, accidentally died. Meanwhile, the killer's next victim is a prostitute, who is tied to a tree and set alight... This unconventional thriller contains considerable amounts of black humour and incorporates that favourite *giallo* sleaze theme: young people being exploited by rich and influential degenerate men. The script, co-authored by Argento's **Deep Red** collaborator Bernardino Zapponi (who re-uses the children's fairy tale clue from that film), is peppered with social observations (like the Italian pre-occupation with corruption) and quirky comic moments (such as a car thief who spouts Freud and a nurse who masturbates loudly in a bathroom to the consternation of her pompous employer). **Too Much Fear** also benefits from the seemingly genuine chemistry between Clery and Placido, who play a pair of likeable detectives. On the evidence of this film and Cavara's peerless **The Black Belly of the Tarantula**, it's a shame that the director didn't undertake more work in the genre (he also made the excellent **The Wild Eye**, a cynical retraction of his own mondo efforts).

Video:

Finland: label unknown - full screen, in Italian with Finnish subtitles, with sleeve title **Bloody Peanuts** and on screen title **...E tanta paura**.
Hungary: Vico - approx. 91m, full screen.
Italy: Kineo Video; Cinelux - letterboxed as **...E tanta paura**.
Japan: SHV - full screen as **Plot of Fear**. The opening credits appear against a black background and Patucchi's opening theme is absent.
Sweden: Imperial Home Video - uncut, in Italian with Swedish subtitles, with sleeve title **Bloody Peanuts** and on screen title **...E tanta paura**.

PUZZLE

L'uomo senza memoria ('Man without a Memory')
Man Without a Memory (alternate English language title)
Puzzle - Man Without a Memory (Denmark and Sweden: video sleeve title)
L'homme sans memoire (France 'Man Without a Memory')
La tranchise infernale (France, Canada: video re-title 'The Infernal Chainsaw')
Attention tueur (France: video re-title)
Der Mann ohne Gedachtnis (Germany: theatrical title)
1974 Italy Eastmancolor colore LV (Luciano Vittori) scope 94m
Production Company: Dania Film
Director: Duccio Tessari
Producer: Luciano Martino
Story: Roberto Infascelli
Screenplay: Bruno Di Geronimo, Duccio Tessari, Ernesto Gastaldi
Cinematography: Giulio Albonico
Editor: Mario Morra
Art Director: Enzo Bulgarelli
Music and Music Director: Gianni Ferrio
Cast: Luc Merenda (*Peter Smith/Edward Walden, known as 'Ted'*), Senta Berger (*Sara Grimaldi*), Umberto Orsini (*Doctor Reinhardt Langer*), Bruno Corazzari (*George*), Anita Strindberg (*Mary Caine*), Rosario Borelli (*Carabinieri sergeant*), Manfred Freyberger (*Philip*), Tom [Tomasso] Felleggi (*Doctor Archibald T. Wildgate*), Duilio Cruciani (*Luca*), Carla Mancini.

In London, a man apparently named Peter is being treated for amnesia, having woken up eight months previously in a clinic following a car accident. The psychiatrist in charge intro-

duces a stranger. He later attacks Peter and accuses him of being a double-crosser. It emerges that Peter's real name is Edward Walden and that two years previously he married Sara, an American woman, whom he left in Portofino, Italy. However, the stranger is suddenly killed by an assassin's bullet. Edward, as he is now known, receives a passport and air-tine ticket to Italy. Meanwhile, in Portofino, Sara has begun a tentative relationship with Reinhardt, a male friend. That night, she disturbs an intruder in her house. Edward arrives and a tense drama unfolds...

Despite the combination of talents (scripted by Gastaldi, directed by Tessari, produced by Luciano Martino) **Puzzle** never really gets going until its second half. The initially languid pace, which allows for snippets of information about the male protagonist's former life to be gradually revealed, might cause some to lose interest. But patience is rewarded by the gripping and bloody finale. Although the identity of one of the villains will be obvious to regular *giallo* viewers, the uneasy, suspicious relationship between Merenda and Berger's characters is intriguing, while Bruno Corazzari (previously a villain in **Next!**) delivers an excellent performance as a menacing low-life. The seemingly gratuitous appearance of a chainsaw at the film's conclusion was no doubt warranted by the notoriety of a certain Texan terror flick from the same year, but this is an incidental detail; the film's actual role model would appear to be **Wait Until Dark**, even though Senta Berger's character isn't blind. Tessari previously directed the superior **Death Occurred Last Night** and **Bloodstained Butterfly**.

Video:

Canada: Video Action - 91m 15s, full screen, good sound quality, with superimposed title **La trousse infernale**

Denmark: label unknown - as **Puzzle**.

France: Colombus - as **Attention tueur**.

Sweden: Walthers Video - 86m 04s: slightly cut, letterboxed, with on-screen title **Puzzle**.

THE PYJAMA GIRL CASE

La ragazza dal pigiama giallo ('The Girl with Yellow Pyjamas')

La chica del pijama amarillo (Spain 'The Girl with Yellow Pyjamas')

Ukendt Offer (Denmark: video sleeve title)

The Case of the Girl with the Yellow Pyjamas (Holland: video sleeve re-title)

Dutch video sleeve for 'The Pyjama Girl Case'



Spanish artwork for 'A Quiet Place to Kill'

Flickan i Gula Pjamasen (Sweden)
1978 Italy/Spain Microstampa Vistavision 105m
Production Company: Zodiac (Rome)/Picasa (Madrid)
Director: Flavio Mogherini
Producer: Giorgio Salvioni
Story and Screenplay: Flavio Mogherini, Rafael Sanchez Campoy
Cinematography: Carlo Carlini
Editor: Adriano Tagliavia
Music: Riz Ortolani
Assistant Directors: Ferruccio Castronuovo, José Maria Ochoa
Cast: Ray Milland (*Inspector Thompson*), Dalila Di Lazzaro (*Linda*), Michele Placido (*Antonio Attolini*), Mel Ferrer (*Professor Henry Douglas*), Howard Ross (*Renato Rossini*) (*Roy Conner*), Ramiro Oliveros (*Inspector Ramsey*), Rod Mullinar (*Inspector Morris*), Giacomo Assandri (*Quint, a murder suspect*), Eugene Walter (*Dorsey*), Fernando Fernan Gomez, Antonio Ferrandiz (*Nattingham*), Vanessa Vitale (*Evelina*), Monica Rey (*Patricia Clark Dorsey*), Andrea Gnecco, Sandra Dobrigna.
Uncredited Cast: Luis Barboo (*viewer of body on public display*).
In Sydney, a young girl discovers a woman's

corpse on the beach. The police, aided by ex-Inspector Thompson, a gruff but intuitive retired cop, attempt to discover the dead woman's identity (her face has been horribly mutilated to make her unidentifiable) and unravel the complicated events which led to her death. In a desperate attempt to lure the killer into revealing himself/herself, the police even put the woman's remains on public display. In the meantime, Thompson discovers clues which bring him close to revealing the killer's identity. Unfortunately, he too is murdered...

Former art director Flavio Mogherini's distinctive thriller is an assured attempt to transpose *giallo* elements into an alien environment, in this case Australia. The parallel strands of the plot are skilfully interwoven so that the viewer is presented with flashbacks of the murdered woman's life, and the continuing investigation side-by-side. Mogherini's attention to detail and the tribulations of the immigrant Italian protagonists make **The Pyjama Girl Case** considerably more thought-provoking than most *giallo*.

Video:

Denmark - 96m 22s, letterboxed, English language, Danish subtitles as **The Pyjama Girl**



Case with sleeve title **Ukendt Offer.**

Holland: Sunrise - 96m 15s, letterboxed, English language, Dutch subtitles as **The Pyjama Girl Case** with sleeve title **The Case of the Girl with the Yellow Pyjamas.**

Sweden: Baroness - letterboxed as **The Pyjama Girl Case** with sleeve title **Flickan i Gula Pjamasen.**

UK: Redemption - 97m 48s, letterboxed as **The Pyjama Girl Case.**

A QUIET PLACE TO KILL

Paranoia (Italy)

Una droga llamada Helen (Spain 'A Drug Called Helen')

The Spider (pre-release English language title)

Døjlig Enke i Farlig Trekant (Denmark: 'Lovely Widow in Dangerous Threesome')

1970 Italy/Spain Eastmancolor Techniscope film

Production Company: Tritone Cinematografica-Medusa (Rome)/Dia (Madrid)

Director: Umberto Lenzi

Story: Marcello Coscia, Rafael Romero Marchent

Script: Marcello Coscia, Bruno Di Geronimo, Rafael Romero Marchent, Marie-Claire Solleville

Cinematography: Guglielmo Mancori

Editor: Enzo Alabiso, Antonio Ramirez

Art Director: Wolfgang Burman

Music: Gregory Garcia Segura

Music Director: Piero Umiliani

Cast: Carroll Baker (*Helen*), Jean Sorel (*Maurice Sauvage*), Luis Davila (*Duchamp*), Alberto Dalbes (*Doctor Harry Webb*), Marina Coffa (*Susan Sauvage*), Anna Proclemer (*Constance Sauvage*), Hugo Blanco, Liz [Lisa] Halvorsen (*Solange*), Manuel Diaz Velasco, Jacques Stany Stanislav (*James*), Rossana Rovere (*nurse*), Dalisto Calisti (*doctor*), Alfonso De La Vega (*chauffeur*), Miguel Beltran, Gaspar Forteza (*first policeman*), Franco Narducci (*second policeman*).

Following a motor racing accident, Helen discovers that she is penniless. She receives a telegram from her ex-husband Maurice, inviting her to his luxury villa in Majorca. However, she discovers that it was his latest wife Constance, a rich American, who sent the invitation. It is soon obvious that philandering Maurice only married Constance for her money. The two women form an uneasy alliance and plan to rid themselves of Maurice. On a sailing trip, they try to kill him but in the ensuing scuffle Maurice stabs Constance to death. Seizing the moment, the ex-lovers drop Constance's weighted body over the side and claim she fell overboard. Her

daughter Susan arrives and is deeply suspicious...

Riding on the success of **The Sweet Body of Deborah** and **Orgasmo** (which was re-titled **Paranoia** for the export market), this film's producers hired director Lenzi, plus Baker and Sorel to repeat their success. They opted to use **Orgasmo**'s English language export title for the Italian release (and, in doing so, caused years of confusion for fans of exploitation cinema!). Despite the sense of déjà-vu, Baker plays an entirely different, more assured role from the one she tackled in her previous Lenzi outing. Perhaps aware that he might be accused of re-treading the same ground, the director tries to add stylistic touches but some of these merely look contrived. The annoying song from **Orgasmo**, *Anytime*, also makes an (unwelcome) re-appearance, presumably as an in-joke. Despite the overall lack of anything radically different - let's not forget that Italian cinema thrives on repeating itself - this is an enjoyable combination of sun, sea and murder. Oh, and Lenzi's cameraman on this one was future trash supremo Aristide Massaccesi (aka Joe D'Amato).

Video:

USA: Unicorn Video - full screen as **A Quiet Place to Kill.**

LA RAGAZZA DI CORTINA

('The Girl from Cortina')

1995 Italy Kodak Telecolor 97m

Production Company: Devon Cinematografica

Director: Maurizio Vanni

Executive Producer: Sergio Martino

Story: Luciano Martino

Screenplay: Pietro Regnoli, Maurizio Rasio

Cinematography: Giancarlo Ferrando

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Director: Francesca Romana Martino

Music and Music Director: Luciano Michelini

Assistant Director: Giandomenico Trillo

Cast: Vanessa Gravina (*Mara*), Isabel Russinova, Stefano Abbati, Paolo Calissano, Alessandro Ragazzini, Manuela Lantermino, Renato Merlino, Lorenzo Flaherty.

A young woman, Mara, is married to a domineering artist who controls her with drugs. No longer willing to put up with the abuse, she speeds off in his jeep and appears to drive off a road into the sea. In reality, she has faked her death in order to escape him completely.

Attempting to come to terms with her torment, she returns to her childhood home in the Italian Alps and becomes close friends with a couple, Sergio and Uba. However, their relationship is shattered when Sergio attempts to rape Mara. To make matters worse, Mara's demented husband turns up. He immediately tries to sexually assault her, and when Uba intervenes he makes lustful advances towards her too. Uba suggests killing him, so they drug his coffee and bury him in the garden. However, he returns from his makeshift grave...

Lumbered with an uninspiring title and an unmistakable Nineties blandness, this '*giallo nuovo*' is a product of its age. But the plot is far from original. Coming from Luciano and Sergio Martino, who concocted so many sublime Seventies thrillers, it contains ideas - such as the scenes in which the artist apparently returns from the dead - cribbed from films as old as **Les Diaboliques** (1954); while other steals include the murder faked as suicide and roadside revelations previously seen in **Next!** But the twists here are well-telegraphed and it doesn't take a genius to work out that something is afoot when the couple seem so keen to make friends with Mara. Other drawbacks are Luciano Michelini's bland score and the terrible spikey wig which Vanessa Gravina wears at the start of the film.

Video:

Italy: Deltavideo - 93m 15s, full screen as **La ragazza di Cortina.**

THE RED LIGHT GIRLS

Prostituzione ('Prostitution')

Dossier di un prostituzione (Italy: alternate title)

Dossier rose de la prostitution (France)

Love Angels (USA)

Sex Slayer (USA: alternate title)

1974 Italy Eastmancolor 88m

Production Company: Angry Film

Director: Rino [Salvatore] Di Silvestro

Producer: Giuliano Anellucci

Screenplay: Rino [Salvatore] Di Silvestro

Cinematography: Salvatore Caruso

Editor: Angelo Curi

Art Director: Diego Alchimedè

Music: Marcello Ramoino, Roberto Fogu

Assistant Director: Giuliano Anellucci

Cast: Maria Fiore (*Primavera*), Aldo Giuffrè

(*Inspector Macaluso*), Elio Zamuto, Krista Nell,

Orchidea De Santis [Sanctis] (*Benedetta*),

Andrea Scotti (*Variale*), Felicita Fanny, Lucretia

Love, Umberto Raho (*blackmail victim*), Magda

Konopka, Liana Trough, Paolo Giusti (*Antonio*),

Cristina Gaioni (*the Venetian*), Gianrico

Toudinelli, Raffaele Cursi (*timid client*),

Gabriella Lepori, Gianni Pesola, Luciano Rossi

(*Faustino*), Gabriella Lepori, Gianni Pesola,

Irene Renton, Marilia Mattei, Luciano Tacconi,

Petro Torrisi, Giuseppe Mattei, Giuseppe

Cinicia, Shirley Corrigan, Francesco D'Adda

(*Crispino Ambrosetti*), Andrea Fantasia (*antique*

dealer), Luis La Torre, Alessandro Perrella,

Lorenzo Piani, Paolo Sceusan, Giuseppe

Tuminelli, Willers Uwe.

Giselle, an attractive university student, is murdered while out selling her body. As the police search her apartment for clues, Michele Esposito, her fiancée, turns up. He has an alibi for the night of the murder, as he was working with Mrs North, his employer. Meanwhile, the police discover that a businessman, Mr. Rossi, is being blackmailed by a photographer named Faustino, who has pictures of him in compromising positions with Giselle. It emerges that Giselle worked as a prostitute for Mrs North and Esposito, but secretly took money from Rossi, who liked to watch while she had sex with customers...

Although **The Red Light Girls** appear to ply their trade in *Giallo* Street, Rino Di Silvestro seems unsure as to how the film should develop. Consequently, the narrative concentrates far too much on the dreary investigation (made all the more unbearable because Aldo Giuffrè's police inspector is dubbed with a particularly thick accent). It also includes some crude comedy ("Ooh wow, what an ass she's got" com-





Italian video sleeve for 'Reflections in Black'

ments the inspector's easily distracted assistant) which, although mildly amusing, detracts from the whodunnit elements of the story. Unfortunately, composers Ramoino and Fogu take their cue from the humorous elements and contribute an unsuitably jovial musical accompaniment which even maintains a jaunty air when a prostitute is about to be gang-raped! Despite such drawbacks, the Seventies ambience and mild sleaze on display make this cheeky little production preferable to Franco Ferrini's *Caramelle di uno sconosciuto*, a 'serious' but painfully dull attempt to depict the tribulations of street girls. Di Silvestro went on to direct the tacky sexploitation/horror classic *Werewolf Woman*.

Video:

UK: Apple - 70m 38s: BBFC 'X' certificate version, letterboxed as *The Red Light Girls*; Cable 2: Global; Diamond Films - 70m 35s: cut by 18 seconds with an '18' certificate, letterboxed as *The Red Light Girls*.

REFLECTIONS IN BLACK

Il vizio ha le calze nere ('Vice Wears Black Hosiery')

1975 Italy Kodak Eastmancolor Technicolor scope 92m
 Production Company: I.R.I. Cinematografica
 Director: Tano [Gaetano] Cimarosa
 Producer: Giovanni Carrino
 Screenplay: Tano [Gaetano] Cimarosa
 Cinematographer: Marcello Masciocchi Rosario
 Editor: Romeo Ciatti
 Art Director: Luigi De Marchi
 Music: Carlo Savina
 Assistant Director: Gianni Siragusa
 Cast: John Richardson (*Inspector Lavina*), Dagmar Lassander (*Leonora Anselmi*), Ninetto Davoli (*Marco*), Magda Konopka (*Contessa Orselmo*), Giacomo Rossi-Stuart (*Mr. Anselmi*), Daniela Giordano (*Concetta, first victim*), Pier Anna Quaia, Tano Cimarosa (*Sergeant Panto*), Giovanni Brusatori (*Mario, the hairdresser*), Dada Gallotti, Gianni Williams, Giovanna D'Albore, Livio Galassi, Marco Buscials.

In Padua, a young woman nicknamed Nellie is slashed to death by a woman in black brandish-

ing a straight razor. Emma Giorgi, another young woman, has her throat sliced open in a park. The police interview Anselmi, a prominent lawyer, because Emma worked as his secretary. Soon after, a third woman is murdered. It seems that the maniac is decimating the female friends of Leonora Anselmi who, although married, has a definite lesbian preference. The most obvious suspect is Marco Orselmo, a simple-minded heroin addict, who enjoys taunting women with a razor...

Having previously dismissed this sleazy little *giallo* for being neither stylish (it certainly isn't nor memorable (yes, most of it's forgettable), it came as a pleasant surprise to see it in an enjoyable light when re-viewing it for this book. Like the same year's *Strip Nude for Your Killer*, this one focuses on the sexual angle, but whereas Bianchi's film boasts glossy production values and a decent cast, Cimarosa's crassly exploitative low budgeter is laughably inept. Every opportunity to reveal female flesh is seized upon, in a vain effort to raise the (largely male) audience's interest because the police investigation is a tired affair. Throwaway comments about hypocrites in the Catholic Church and the corrupt nature of politicians are nothing more than asides, dropped in to please its cynical Italian audience. John Richardson (still suffering the ignominy of *Eyeball*) and Giacomo Rossi-Stuart (whose role here recalls his somnabulist appearance in *Something Creeping in the Dark*) must have realised that their careers had reached rock bottom because they seem embarrassed every time they appear on screen. *Reflections in Black* is a thoroughly dog-eared affair but, like most old items of seemingly no value, when it's taken at face value it somehow has a trashy appeal that's difficult to resist. Now, if I could only bring myself to watch Tano's *Death Hunt* again...

Video:

Greece: Key - 74m 05s, full screen, Greek subtitles as *Reflections in Black*.

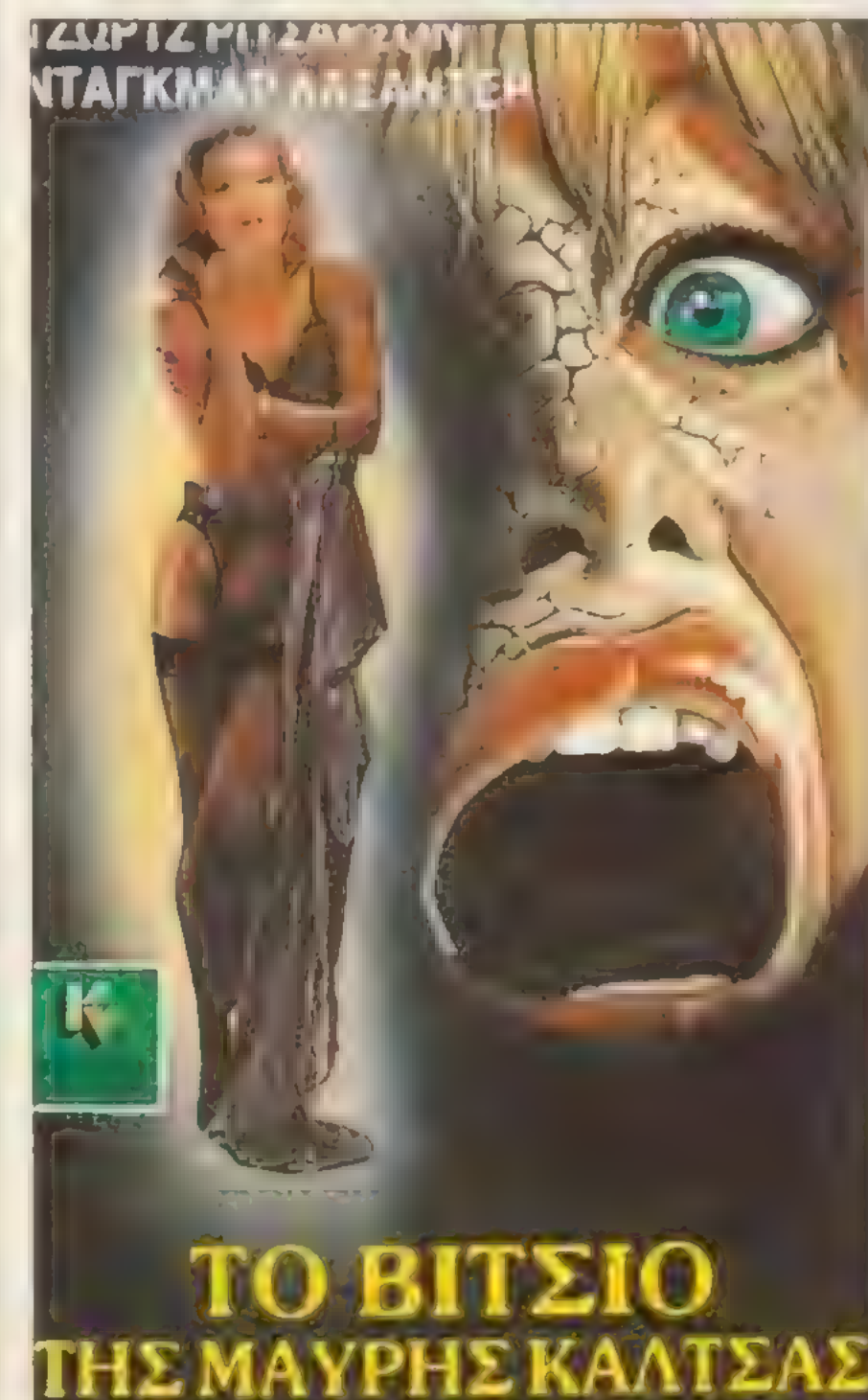
Holland: label unknown - as *Reflections in Black*.

Italy: 3B Magnum - 88m 20s, full screen as *Il vizio ha le calze nere*.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero CD - 'Murder For Pleasure Giallo and Thriller Themes' compilation - two themes, including the opening murder sequence.

Greek video sleeve for 'Reflections in Black'





Above: Greek video sleeve for 'Rings of Fear'
Right: Spanish press-sheet for 'Rings of Fear'

RINGS OF FEAR

Enigma rosso ('Red Enigma')

Die Orgie des Todes (Germany: 'The Orgy of the Dead')

Trafico de menores (Spain: 'Trade in Minors')

Yon Terrori (Finland: video sleeve re-title)

Red Rings of Fear (UK: theatrical title)

Trauma (USA: video title)

Virgin Terror (USA, UK: alternate video title)

Concentric Rings of Fear (pre-sales title?)

1978 Italy/West Germany/Spain Telecolor 94m

Production Company: Daimo Cinematografica

(Rome)/C.C.C. Filmkunst (Berlin)/C.I.P.I. (Madrid)

Director: Alberto Negrin

Producer: Leonardo Pescarolo

Story: D. Miguel De Echarr y Gamundi

Screenplay: Marcello Coccia, Massimo

Dallamano, Franco Ferrini, Stefano Ubezio,

Alberto Negrin, Peter Berling

Cinematography: Edoardo Noe

Editor: Paolo Boccio

Art Director: Santiago Ontanon

Music: Riz Ortolani

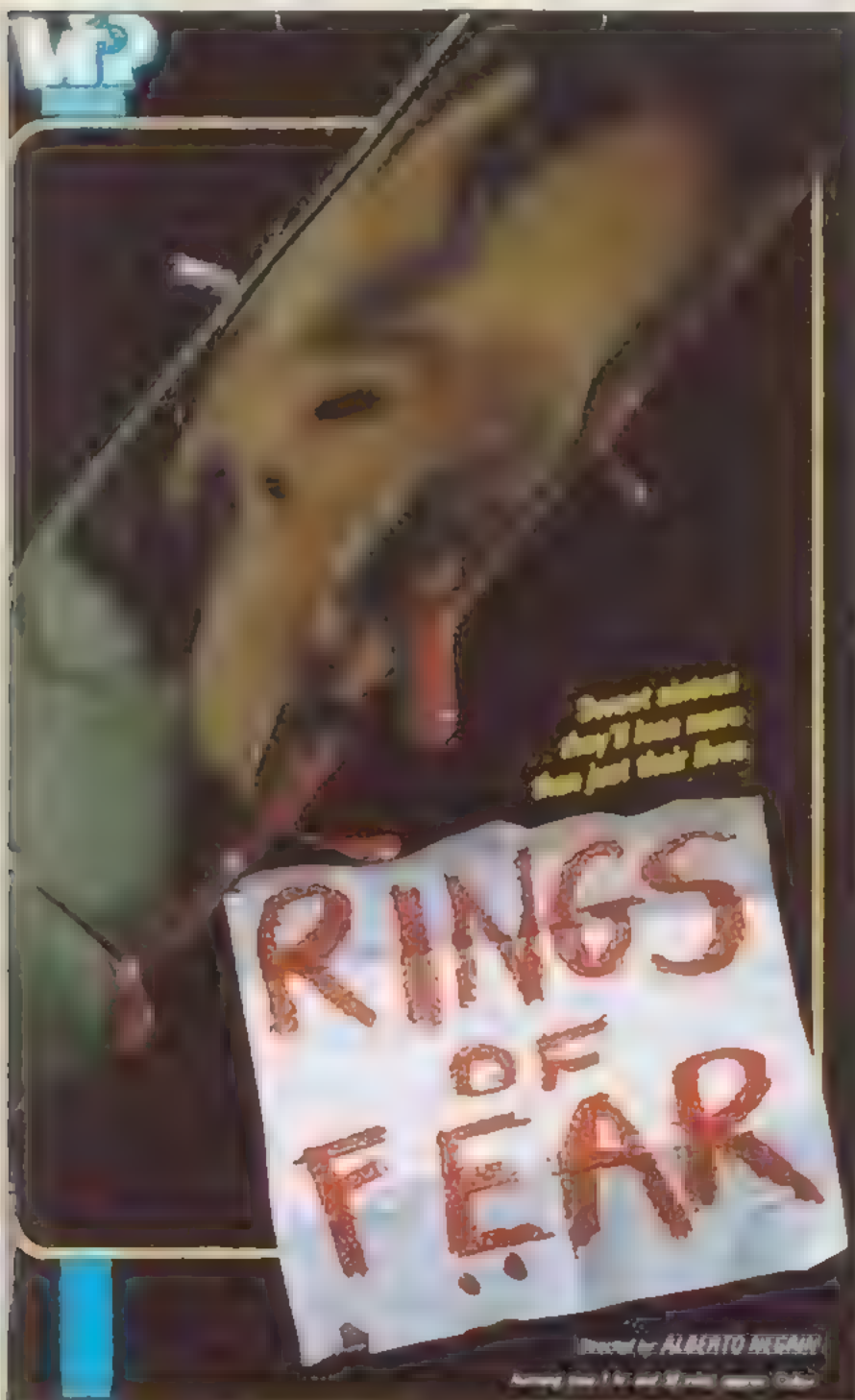


Assistant Directors: Marcello Tagliaferri, Andres Vich

Cast: Fabio Testi (*Inspector Johnny Di Salvo*), Ivan Desny (*Chief Inspector Roccaglio*), Bruno Alessandro, Jack Taylor (*Michael Parravacini*), Christine Kaufmann (*Christine, Di Salvo's girlfriend*), Fausta Aveli (*Emily Russo*), Brigitte Wagner (*Virginia*), Caroline Ohrner, Silvia Aguilar, Taida Urruzcla.
Uncredited Cast: Helga Line' (*Angela Russo's mother*), Tony Isbert.

Angelo Russo, a sixteen year-old girl, is found dead in a river, having been fatally violated with a large blunt instrument. Inspector Di Salvo is assigned to the case and focuses his investigations on St. Theresa's, the exclusive school where Angela boarded. Three of the murdered girl's classmates, Franca, Paola and Virginia (who call themselves 'The Inseparables'), receive threatening poems from an individual using the name 'Nemesis'. Bizarre 'accidents' start to befall the girls: Franca is injured when someone causes her horse to bolt and Virginia nearly breaks her neck on marbles left at the top of a staircase. But Di Salvo is determined to find the killer, even if it means using unorthodox methods. He is aided by Angela Russo's little sister Emily, whose helpful clues lead to a boutique owned by a dubious character and a vice ring where "rich influential men pay well for teenage favours"...

This is the final, somewhat grubbier, addition to Massimo Dallamano's unofficial 'schoolgirls-in-peril' trilogy (which began with **What Have You Done To Solange?** and continued with **What Have They Done To Your Daughters?**). Even so, **Red Rings** is well-paced and keeps the viewer guessing right until its cynical ending, by which time it is obvious that the real killer of the teenage girl, will remain unpunished. The film doesn't stint on the sleaze: it's not long before a plethora of nubile teenage girls are paraded about in the school showers. Nastier still, a backstreet abortion is tastelessly intercut with a flashback to an orgy - where a huge dildo is waved about in front of the camera before being forced into the unfortunate girl found dead at the start of the movie. The on-screen violence is muted in the version under review and Negrin's direction is difficult to appreciate due to the ugly pan and scan presentation. Despite such irritating cinematic stylistic conceits are apparent: a fleeting underwater shot from a corpse's point-of-view; the paint from a spray gun slowly blacking out the screen in place of a standard dissolve; a close-up of the large dildo being thrust towards the camera (and by implication, the female victim's vagina); and a shot from inside a school girl's drawer which reveals her naked body as she opens it. These admittedly minor flaws elevate **Red Rings** from being a mediocre whodunnit into a modish exercise in sleaze.





Italian video sleeve for 'Scandal in Black'

ema which, combined with some peculiar characters, make it a better-than-average *gialli*. Riz Ortolani's memorably brash score is taken from Dallamano's *Superbitch Blue Movie Blackmail*.

Video:

Australia: Delta - full screen as *Virgin Terror*.
Finland: label unknown as *Virgin Terror* with sleeve title *Virgin Terror*.

A body is discovered in 'The Scorpion with Two Tails'

Germany: UFA - 77m 18s: re-edited rather than cut (the sexual violence is toned down but it has a few shots that are not in the English language versions), letterboxed, good quality print as *Die Orgie des Todes*.

Greece: GV Group Video - as *Red Rings of Fear*

79m 33s, full screen, poor quality print as *Virgin Terror*.

Italy: Domovideo - 81m 07s, letterboxed, picture is slightly soft and the sound level is low, as *Enigma rosso*.

UK: VFP - 81m 07s, full screen, muffled sound as *Rings of Fear*, includes a gory trailer for *Anthropophagous the Beast*; Video Shack; Drumhouse/In-House - 79m 07s: cut by 14 seconds with a BBFC '18' rating as *Virgin Terror*.

USA: Wizard; Lettuce Entertain You - full screen as *Virgin Terror*.

SCANDAL IN BLACK

Appuntamento in nero ('Appointment in Black')

Blue Night (Italy: video re-release title)

1990 Italy Fuji colour 87m

Production Company: Real Film

Director: Antonio Bonifacio

Story and Screenplay: Daniele Stroppa

Cinematography: Pier Luigi Santi

Editor: Carlo Pulera

Art Direction and Set Design: Mario Rossetti

Music: Marco Rossetti

Assistant Director: Annalisa De Simone

Cast: Mirella Banti (*Angela Baldwin*), Andy J.

Forest (*John Baldwin*), Mary Lindstrom (*Eva*

Marsi), Daniele Stroppa, Rossana Coggiola,

Sonia Viviani, Franco Citti, Marina Hedman

[Frajese] (*cashier in sex cinema box office*),

Luca Laurenti, Ann Margareth Hughes, Angela

Pacini, Laura Piattella, Vincent Regina, Giorgio

Sessa, Dario Silvagni, Vito Terribile, Piero

Villaggio, Matteo Vocale.

A man rapes a teenage girl. Fifteen years later, an attractive woman goes into a porno cinema. She is sexually assaulted with a broken bottle

in the ladies toilets. A stranger in mirrored sun glasses, who seems to be known to the woman, watches her being taken away. The victim is Angela, the wife of John Baldwin, a diplomat. Meanwhile, John is having an affair with Eva, a model. The cinema projectionist reveals that he saw Angela lacerating herself to make it look like she was attacked and demands blackmail money. The next day, he takes her back to the cinema toilets and rapes her. Rosy, the Baldwins' maid, routinely spies on her employers and learns of more than one murder plan...

Only a very crass film opens with soft-focus shots of a teenage girl being raped and immediately follows these with supposedly provocative images of an attractive woman driving a flash car, while licking her lips and stroking the gear knob. And *Scandal in Black* continues to exploit images of sexual violence, most of which has been unsurprisingly censored from the UK release (including two gore shots showing the aforementioned rapist's fate). As is the case with most Nineties erotic thrillers, the plot grinds to a halt every few minutes for some unexciting nookie (although Bonifacio's film is not as guilty of this annoying trend as a film like *Intimate Crimes*). Despite the plot interruptions, this is actually one of the better *gialli* from recent years, including much morally reprehensible imagery and some enjoyably risible twists. Unfortunately, most of the characters are too thinly sketched for the viewer to care much about their fate. It makes a change for there to be a female police inspector - who aspires to be *Columbo* - but she is shown to be startlingly inept. Self-mocking details include a poster in the sex cinema for another tale of deceit and extra-marital affairs, *Fatal Temptation*, plus skin-flick star Marina Frajese as a cashier complaining that you can't ever draw an audience for high-class porn (the film being shown is *Emmanuelle 5*). Lurid but undeniably entertaining, *Scandal in Black* needs to be seen in its uncut version to be fully appreciated.



EL ASESINO DEL CEMENTERIO ETRUSCO

ELVIRE AUDRAY · PAOLO MALCO · CLAUDIO CASSINELLI · MARILU TOLO · WANDISA GUIDA
con la participación de JOHN SAXON y VAN JOHNSON

Fotografía: CHARLES FERRAND Música: F. FRIZZI Eastmancolor

Un film de: CHRISTIAN PLUMMER





EL ASESINO DEL CEMENTERIO ETRUSCO

ELVIRE AUDRAY · P. MALCO · C. CASSINELL · MARILU TOLO · WANDISA GUIDA
con la participación de JOHN SAXON y VAN JOHNSON

Fotografía: CHARLES FERRAND Música: F. FRIZZI Eastmancolor

Un film de: CHRISTIAN PLUMMER

Video:

Italy: Center Video - 84m 26s, full screen as **Appuntamento in nero**; Arca Video - 84m 23s, full screen as **Blue Night**.

UK: Rio Pictures - 81m 54s: cut by 44 seconds with a BBFC '18' certificate, full screen as **Scandal in Black**.

THE SCORPION WITH TWO TAILS

Assassinio al cimitero Etrusco ('Murders in the Etruscan Cemetery')

Crimes au cimetiere etrusque (France 'Crimes in the Etruscan Cemetery')

Scorpion (Denmark, Sweden: video sleeve title)

Kaksihantainen Skorpioni (Finland)

Lo scorpione a due code (Italy: alternate title)

El asesino del cementerio Etrusco (Spain)

1982 Italy/France colour LV (Luciano Vittori) scope 97m

Production Company: Dania Film S.r.l.

(Rome)/Medusa Distribuzione S.r.l.

(Rome)/Imp.Ex. Ci. S.A. (Nice)/Les Films

Jacques Leitienne (Paris)

Director: Christian Plummer [Sergio Martino]

Producer: Luciano Martino

Story: Ernesto Gastaldi, Dardano Sacchetti

Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi, Maria Chianetta, Jacques Leitienne

Cinematography: Giancarlo Ferrando

Editors: Eugenio Alabiso, Daniele Alabiso

Art Director: Antonello Geleng

Music: Fabio Frizzi

Special Effects: Paolo Ricci

Assistant Director: Massimo Manasse

Cast: Elvire Audray (*Joan Barnard*), Paolo

Malco (*Mike Grant*), Claudio Cassinelli (*Paolo*

Domelli), Marilu' Tolo (*Maria*), Luigi Rossi, Van

Johnson (*Mulligan, Joan's father*), Sonia Viviani

(*Contessa Maria Volumna*), John Saxon (*Arthur*

Barnard), Jacques Stany (Stanislav), Wandisa

Guida, Gianfranco Barra, Mario Cecchi, Franco

Garofalo (*Gianni Andrucci, the photographer*),

Maurizio Mattioli, Carlo Nonni, Anita Sagnotti

Laurenzi, Nazzareno Cardinali, Angela Doria,

Antonio Maimone, Anthony Freeman [Mario

Novelli], Lucia Monaco, Bruno Rosa.

Joan Barnard suffers from nightmares which involve sacrifices in a cavern. Her husband Arthur, an esteemed archaeologist studying Etruscan culture in Italy, phones and tells her of a buried tomb he has discovered, but his neck is broken by an unseen assailant. Joan flies to Italy to investigate. She comes into possession of an ancient pendant, showing a scorpion with two tails, apparently a symbol of divinity. Meanwhile, in the States, Joan's father Mulligan is mortified to discover one of the expedition crates missing. Meanwhile a strange old man leads Joan to a complex of caves, which she recognises from her dreams. He imbues Joan with immortal status but is swiftly killed, while she discovers a crate full of heroin before being kidnapped. Her father arrives, confesses his part in drug-trafficking but insists that someone else was responsible for Arthur's death...

Condensed down from **Il misterio degli Etruschi**, a seven part television series, this uninvolved *giallo*/horror feature betrays its small screen origins with each twist of the plot. Former thriller maestro Martino (**Next!**, **Case of the Scorpion's Tail**, **Torso**) delivers a surprisingly flat, almost travelogue tale - the Etruscan ruins are more exciting than the machinations of the plot and some of the dialogue scenes seem like auditions for a cast who don't appear to care if they get the parts. Worse still, Martino and regular cinematographer Giancarlo Ferrando fail to capitalise on the underground cave locations, while handfuls of maggots and a half-hearted bat attack hardly compensate for the lack of blood-letting. The final insult comes when you realise that Fabio Frizzi's score seems familiar: it's rehashed from **The Beyond!** This opportunist offering must have been a real slog in its full version.



Greek sleeve for 'The Secret of Seagull Island'

Video:

Denmark: label unknown - uncut, full screen with sleeve title **Scorpion**.

Finland: Magnum - 94m.

France: Lumiere/Carrere; Jacques Leitienne Video; Rene Chateau. All as **Crimes au cimetiere Etrusque**.

Greece - full screen as **Scorpion With Two Tails**.

Italy: AVO Film - as **Assassinio al cimitero Etrusco**.

Spain: JF Films - 93m 51s, tiny black bars as **El asesino del cementerio**.

Sweden: Hem Video - uncut, with sleeve title **Scorpion**; Sun Video - uncut, with sleeve title **Scorpion**.

USA: Cinema Group; Palisades; Prism Entertainment - all as **Scorpion With Two Tails**.

THE SECRET OF SEAGULL ISLAND

L'isola del gabbiano ('Seagull Island')

1979 Italy/UK Technospes 107m

Production Company: Ulisse Film Produzione

Director and Producer: Nestore Ungaro

Story: Nestore Ungaro

Screenplay: Augusto Caminito, Nestore

Ungaro, Jeremy Burnham

Cinematography: Armando Nannuzzi

Supervising Editors: Tony Lenny, Angelo Curi

Editor: Gunter Glinka

Art Director: Giuseppe Mangano

Music and Music Direction: Tony Hatch

Special Effects: Germano Natali

Assistant Director: Antonio Gabrielli

Cast: Jeremy Brett (*David Malcolm*), Prunella

Ransome (*Barbara Carey*), Nicky Henson

(*Martin Foster*), Pamela Salem (*Carol*), Gabriele

Tinti (*Enzo Lombardi*), Fabrizio Jovine

(*Inspector Casati*), Vassili Karamesinis (*Giulio*),

Sherry Buchanan (*Mary Ann Saunders*), Marco

Mastantuono (*Frederick*), Umberto Raho (*doc*), Veronica Wells (*Cynthia*), Helen Stirling (*director of music academy*), Chico Tocci (*Marco*), Paul Mueller [aka Muller] (*Marshall*), Lascia Musy (*Consuelo*), Peter Boom (*hotel concierge*), Katherine Berg (*Arlene*), Walter Adams (*optician*), Stefania Maccarone (*topless girl on Lombardi's boat*).

Barbara arrives in Rome to visit her blind sister, Mary Ann. Discovering that her sister is missing, Barbara enlists the aid of Martin Foster, an employee at the British Consul. The police link Mary Ann's disappearance with the case of a woman who was found tied down to the ocean floor. Barbara becomes increasingly concerned when it appears that a psychopath is murdering young girls. The trail leads to Seagull Island and some extraordinary revelations...

The co-production was lensed as a five-part television series during 1979 but not screened until 1981, under the title **Seagull Island**. It's

feature's televisual origins, director Nestore Ungaro and cinematographer Armando Nannuzzi conjure up some occasionally effective visuals, such as a frenzied seagull attack, the image of a woman without eyes weighted down on the ocean floor and shots through a swimming pool window of the female protagonist being stalked (Ungaro was an underwater specialist, having handled the aquatic photography on films like **Tentacles**). Nicky Henson is an affable hero but Jeremy Brett (later to become famous as **Sherlock Holmes**) is undoubtedly the film's best asset, delivering a performance of surprising resonance. Freckle-faced Prunella Ransome (previously in **Would You Kill a Child?**) seems initially reticent about her excursion to **Seagull Island** but she eventually perks up and proves to be an effective female lead. Tony Hatch even manages to allow us to briefly forget that he specialised in soap opera themes by contributing a reasonably effective 'psycho-on-the-loose' score.

Video:

Greece: Hellenic Video Enterprises - 103m 12s full screen as **The Secret of Seagull Island**
UK: Precision - 103m 07s, full screen as **The Secret of Seagull Island**.

SEVEN BLOODSTAINED ORCHIDS

Sette orchidee macchiate di rosso ('Seven Orchids Stained in Red')

Das Ratsel des Silbernen Halbmondes (Germany 'Puzzle of the Silver Half Moons')

Adieu tueur (Belgium and France: video sleeve re-title 'Farewell Killer')

7 Verista Orkideaa (Finland: video sleeve title)

La tueur a l'orchidee (France 'The Orchid Killer')

Seven Orchids Stained in Blood (Greece: video title)

Siete orquideas manchadas de rojo (Spain 'Seven Orchids Stained in Red')

1972 Italy/West Germany Eastmancolor Technochrome scope 91m

Production Company: Flora Film/National Cinematografica (Rome)/Rialto Film (Berlin)

Director: Umberto Lenzi

Story: Umberto Lenzi

Screenplay: Roberto Gianviti, Umberto Lenzi

Cinematography: Angelo Lotti

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Director: Giacomo Calo' Carducci

Music and Music Director: Riz Ortolani

Assistant Director: Fulvio Barresi

Cast: Antonio Sabato (*Mario Gerosan*), Uschi

Glass (*Giulia Gerosan*), Pier Paolo Capponi

(*police inspector*), Rossella Falk (*Elena Marchi*),

Marina Malfatti (*Kathy Adams, a painter*),

Renato Romano (*priest*), Claudio Gora,

Gabriella Giorgelli (*Marcella, a prostitute*), Aldo

Barberito, Bruno Corazzari (*painter at party*),

Franco Fantasia (*Inspector Renzi*), Petra

Schurmann (*Concetta De Rosa*), Ivano Davoli,

Linda Sini, Nello Pazzafini, Carla Mancini, Enzo

Andronico, Fulvio Mingozzi, Nestore Cavaricci,

Marisa Mell (*Anna Sartori*).

A woman is fatally stabbed in bed, a prostitute is battered into oblivion and a female painter is strangled with a telephone cord. Another woman, Giulia, who is on her honeymoon, is attacked in a train carriage but the killer flees when her husband Mario comes to the rescue. In spite of his protestations to the police, Mario is accused of being the murderer. He sets out to prove his innocence by conducting his own enquiries. In the meantime, a woman in an insane asylum is drowned in a bath and another female victim is power-drilled to death...

Seven Bloodstained Orchids begins like a textbook example of an early Seventies *giallo*. A cool Riz Ortolani score accompanies images of a black saloon cruising through an urban landscape while an array of city lights illuminate the darkness. Point-of-view shots reveal a knife-wielding, black-gloved killer stabbing a female victim and brutally slaying a prostitute. Despite some notably nasty murders, including a bloody death by power-drill, Lenzi is unable to maintain the classic style and composition of the film's opening scenes and once the (usual) alienated male protagonist begins to investigate this puzzle of the silver half-moons, the plot begins to meander. Sabato has never been a strong lead and, by allowing this undistinguished actor to carry the bulk of the film's narrative baggage, Lenzi lets the viewer's attention slip. Musical themes from **So Sweet, So Perverse** are recycled and their presence on this film's soundtrack only serves to emphasise the fact that the director's previous thrillers were superior examples of psychological rather than physical terror. Judging by the hilarious tourist-torment in **Eyeball** a couple of years later, he seemed to have lost interest in *gialli* and was keen to explore the ultra-violent reactionary possibilities of the cynical cop thriller, with masterpieces of mayhem such as **Almost Human**. Interestingly, the German release of **Seven Bloodstained Orchids**, complete with traditional bullet-holes and voice from the

Video sleeve for 'Seven Bloodstained Orchids'



grave introduction, represented the death-knell of the Edgar Wallace-inspired *krimi* thrillers.

Video:

Belgium and France: Colombus - slightly letterboxed with sleeve title **Adieu tueur**.

Finland: Magna Filmi Oy - 88m 39s, full screen, Italian language, Finnish subtitles as **Seven Blood-Stained Orchids** with sleeve title **7 Verista Orkideaa**.

France: United Video Distribution; Socai - as **Le tueur a l'orchidee**.

Germany: Taurus Video 'Edgar Wallace' series as **Das Ratsel des Silbernen Halbmonds**.

Greece: VCI - 88m 39s, full screen, Greek subtitles as **Seven Blood-Stained Orchids**.

Italy: CVR Realvision - 88m 58s, letterboxed as **Sette orchidee macchiate di rosso**.

Spain: label unknown.

SEVEN DEATHS IN THE CAT'S EYES

La morte negli occhi del gatto ('Death in the Eyes of the Cat')

Les diablesses (France)

Sieben tote in den augen der katze

(Germany 'Seven Dead in the Cat's Eyes')

Kauhujen Verinen Kappeli (Finland: video sleeve title)

Cat's Murdering Eye (Greece: video sleeve title)

Siete muertos en los ojos del gato (Spain 'Seven Dead in the Cat's Eyes')

Corringa

1973 Italy/France/West Germany Technicolor Techniscope 96m

Production Company: Starkiss-Falcon International Film (Rome)/Capitol Films (Paris)/Roxy Film (Munich)

Director: Anthony M. Dawson (Antonio Margheriti)

Producer: Luigi Nannerini

Story: based on a novel by Peter Bryan

Screenplay: Giovanni Simonelli, Antonio Margheriti

Additional Dialogue: Ted Rusoff

Cinematography: Carlo Carlini

Editor: Giorgio Serralunga

Art Director: Ottavio Scotti

Music and Music Director: Riz Ortolani

Cast: Jane Birkin (*Corringa*), Hiram Keller (*Lord James MacGrieff*), Francoise Christophe (*Lady Mary MacGrieff*), Venantino Venantini (*Father Robertson*), Doris Kunstmann (*Suzanne, French teacher*), Anton Diffring (*Doctor Franz*), Dana Ghia (*Lady Alicia*), Luciano Pigozzi (*Angus, a servant*), George Korrad (*Campbell, the butler*), Serge Gainsbourg (*police inspector*), Bianca Doria (*Janet Campbell*), Tom [Tomasso] Felleghi (*man at funeral*), Franco Ressel (*family friend*), Alessandro Perrella, Bruno Boschetti.

The 19th Century: a man is murdered with a straight razor. Corringa MacGrieff returns from boarding school to Dragonston, the ancestral Scottish castle where her family are holding a reunion. Evening dinner is disturbed when Corringa is frightened by an ape-like figure she sees emerging from a wooden panel. However, the meal is abandoned completely when Lord James, an arrogant young man who admits to being mad, begins to abuse the guests. That night, Lady Alicia is smothered to death with a pillow. Several other inexplicable murders occur under the watchful eyes of the castle cat. Corringa becomes aware that she is the killer's next intended victim...

This gothic *giallo* begins frenetically with a pre-credits murder after which rats devour the corpse - all the while viewed by the overweight titular moggy. This unsubtle opening sets the tone for what becomes almost a black comedy in which every character is either a blithering eccentric or stark raving mad (it's no surprise that Simonelli and Margheriti's previous stab at the genre, *The Young, the Evil and the Savage*, was also full of humour). To top it all, there is the splendidly absurd notion that lunatic Lord James would keep a live (and insane!) ex-circus gorilla caged up in his quar-

Striking Italian locandina for 'Seven Deaths in the Cat's Eyes'



HIRAM KELLER • JANE BIRKIN

LA MORTE NEGLI OCCHI DEL GATTO

VENANTINO VENANTINI • DANA GHIA

FRANCOISE
CHRISTOPHE

DORIS
KUNSTMANN

LUCIANO PIGOZZI

ANTONY
DIFFRING

GEORG
KONRAD

SERGE
GAINSBOURG

VIA COPIAZIONE STARKISS (ROMA) - CAPITOLE (PARIGI) - ROXY (MÜNCHEN)

REGIA DI ANTHONY M. DAWSON

MUSICHE DI RIZ ORTOLANI

TECHNICOLOR - TECHNISCOPÉ

PRIMA EDIZIONE ITALIANA 1973

MADE IN ITALY BY STARKISS

ters, which allows for some vintage monkeying about behind wall panels by the real killer. References to chimeras, vampires and even "a new theory by someone called Freud" are thrown into the pot but go nowhere. The casting of Euro-pop chanteuse Jane Birkin (as the ingenuous heroine) and Gallic songster Serge Gainsbourg (as a sarcastic Scots police inspector) adds novelty value but nothing much else. The overblown package, like a horror version of *Bagpuss*, is suitably complemented by Ottolenghi's bombastic orchestral arrangements (inspired from *The Virgin of Nuremberg*). The real irony is that if this relatively obscure mish-mash of themes were a Hammer production it would probably have a legion of rabid fans.

Video:

UK: Star Video - 86m 56s, letterboxed, good quality print as **Seven Deaths in the Cat's Eyes**.
 France: SVP - as **Les Diabesses**.
 Germany: label unknown - letterboxed at 2:35:10 as **Sieben tote in den augen der katze**.
 Italy: Normale - as **La morte negli occhi nel gatto**.
 USA: AVO Film - letterboxed as **La morte negli occhi del gatto**.
 USA: Prism Entertainment - **Seven Deaths in the Cat's Eyes**.

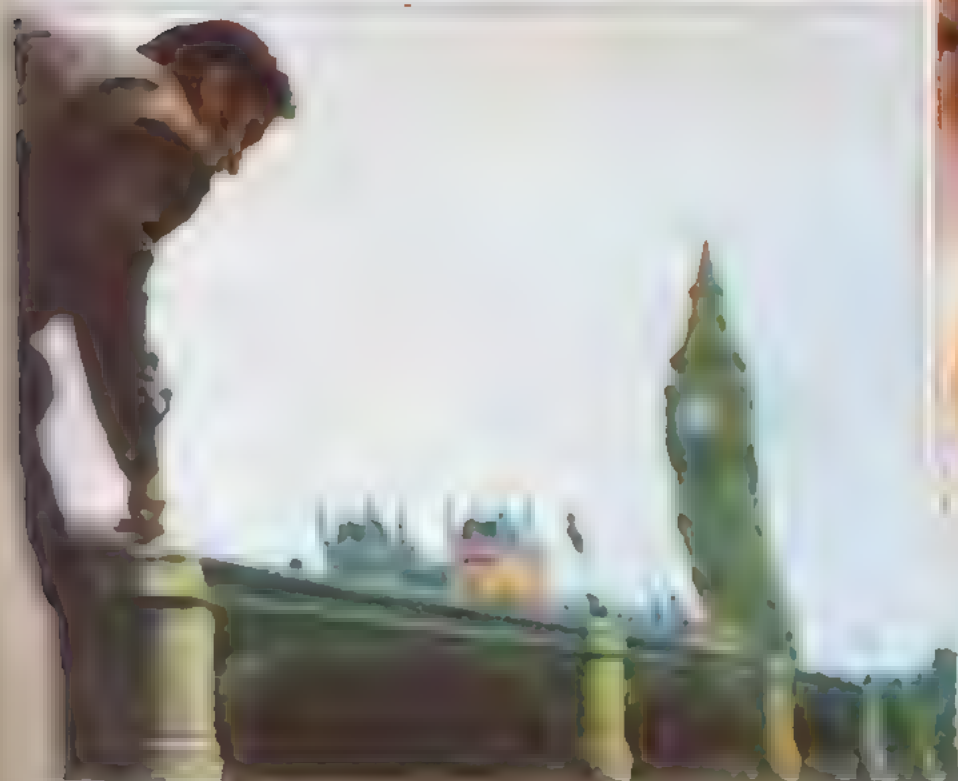
SEVEN MURDERS FOR SCOTLAND YARD

7 cadaveri per Scotland Yard ('Seven Cadavers For Scotland Yard')
Jack el destripador de Londres (Spain)
Jack the Ripper of London (USA)
Jack the Ripper
Jack the Mangler of London
 1971 Spain/Italy Technicolor Techniscope 86m
 Production Company: Cinefilms S.I. (Madrid)/International Apollo Film (Rome)
 Director: José Luis Madrid
 Producers: Sandro Amati, José Maria Tellez
 Story and Screenplay: José Luis Madrid, Jacinto Molina, Tito Carpi
 Cinematography: Diego Ubeda
 Editor: Luis Puigvert
 Art Director: Juan Alberto Soler, Bruno Cesari
 Music: Piero Piccioni
 Special Effects: Antonio Molina
 Assistant Director: Renzo Genta
 Cast: Paul Naschy [Jacinto Molina] (*Peter*), Patricia Loran, Irene Mir, Franco Borelli, Renzo Marignano, Andres Resino, Victor Iregua, Teresita Castizio, Carmen Roger, Paloma Moreno, Victor Vilanova, Maika (sic), Miguel Minuesa, Isidoro Novellas, Alfonso Castizio, Antonio Ramis, Enrique Beltran.

A rainy night in London's Soho: a prostitute is brutally stabbed to death by a mysterious killer. Peter, a crippled ex-acrobat, drowns his sorrows in a local pub. His girlfriend, also a prostitute, is soon murdered. The police, led by Inspector Campbell, nickname the killer 'Jack the Ripper' and Peter becomes their main suspect. A teenage girl from a local school is the next victim. Her boyfriend is discovered standing near her butchered body with a knife. He escapes into the night but is killed by a passing car. Peter spends a drunken night with a local tart called Brigitte. Next morning, he is horrified to discover her dead body beside him in bed and narrowly escapes being captured by the police. The real killer sends the police a prostitute's head in a hat box before murdering the school-teacher's pretty wife and another prostitute. Peter follows Campbell to an abandoned church in the countryside. The killer's lair holds a macabre collection of human body parts and Campbell meets 'Jack the Ripper' face to face... This mainly Spanish horror-*giallo* benefits from Diego Ubeda's clear location photography of London and its environs but falters whenever it reverts to unconvincing studio locations. As usual, Naschy is less than adequate in a role that requires real audience sympathy. When he stares at the camera you can't help thinking

FIDA
presenta

SEVEN MURDERS FOR SCOTLAND YARD



WITH
PAUL NASCHY
PATRICIA LORAN
RENZO MARIGNANO
ORCHIDEA DE SANTIS

DIRECTED BY
J. L. MAKRIK
 MUSIC
PIERO PICCIONI
EASTMANCOLOR





'Seven Murders for Scotland Yard'



Hotel'



Dutch sleeve for 'Shadow of Death'

that he is about to turn into a werewolf (he probably wished he were playing Waldemar Daninsky rather than a Jack the Ripper suspect). The identity of the killer is blindingly obvious, making this more of a whydunnit than a whodunnit. Nevertheless, the numerous murders (all female victims, naturally) are carried out with nasty relish, the finale in the killer's secret chamber of horrors is appropriately over-the-top and Piccioni's score is surprisingly effective.

Video:

Italy: Mitel; Stardust. Both as **7 cadaveri per Scotland Yard**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Beat CD on a double-bill with **7 Hyden Park la casa maledetta**.

SHADOW OF DEATH

L'assassino fantasma ('The Phantom Assassin')

Il vuoto intorno (Italy: re-release title 'The Emptiness Around')

L'assasin fantome (France: 'The Phantom Assassin')

The Emptiness All Around (Holland: video sleeve title)

1968 Spain/Italy Eastmancolor 89m

Production Company: Leda Film

(Madrid)/Meteor Film (Rome)

Director: Xavier [Javier] Seto

Producers: Diego Alchimedee, Dino De Pascalis

Story: Santiago Moncada, Xavier Seto

Screenplay: Gianfranco Clerici, Santiago

Moncada, Xavier Seto

Cinematographer: Antonio Piazza

Editor: Gaby Penalba

Art Director: Arrigo Equini

Music: Franco Micalizzi

Assistant Director: Cesare Semprebene,

Gonzalo Del Gras

Cast: Larry Ward (*Peter/John*), Teresa Gimpera

(*Denise*), Jack Stuart [Giacomo Rossi-Stuart]

(*Gert Mueller*), Silvana Venturilli (*Annie*),

Fernando Polack, Eugenio Navarro, Javier

Rivera, José Bastida.

A black-clad stranger drives into a town in the Alps. He visits Denise, his ex-lover and is revealed to be Gert Mueller, now down on his luck. Denise is married to John, an apparently straight-laced pharmacist, but is having an affair with Peter, his twin brother. Mueller sees an opportunity for blackmail. Peter and Denise

INGRID THULIN • JEAN SOREL • MARIO ADORF



LA CORTA NOTTE DELLE BAMBOLE DI VETRO

BARBARA BACH • FABIAN SOVAGOVIC JOSE QUAGLIO • PIERO VIDA
RELJA BASIC • DANIELE DUBLINO

MUSICHE DI ENNIO MORRICONE • PRODOTTO DA ENZO DORIA • REGIA DI ALDO LADO

UNA CO-PRODUZIONE DORIA G. FILM s.r.l. • DUNHILL CIN. CA s.r.l.

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PRIMA EDIZIONE ITALIANA 1971

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Italian locandina for 'The Short Night of the Glass Dolls'

are attempting to drive John insane. Whilst preparing to go to a pharmaceutical conference John suffers an epileptic attack and so Peter adopts his identity. In doing so, he discovers that his brother is not quite the innocent he seems. Rather than paying Mueller blackmail money, Peter enlists his aid to send his twin mad...

This obscure thriller seems to have escaped the attention of most reviewers. This is a shame because it offers a totally unsubtle, but reasonably engaging psychological game, which is surprisingly cruel: "I'm about to destroy your brain John" asserts the greedy twin. The oppressive small-town setting - "so dreary, so monotonous" - is used as an Emile Zola-esque reason for the desperate actions of the protagonists. The film also features that Sixties favourite, the tune used to drive someone mad. Co-scripter Santiago Moncada wrote **Hatchet For the Honeymoon**, while Gianfranco Clerici worked on several Fulci flicks. Meanwhile, Micalizzi's unique score features a male choir, a manic driving rhythm, a female soloist, soaring trumpets, and jangling keyboards. This odd amalgam of sounds might have come from a Spaghetti Western (which is ironic because in a splendid example of how plots can easily be transposed in genre cinema, the opening shots in **Shadow of Death** could have as easily depicted a stranger riding into town on a horse).

Video:

Holland: Sunrise - 85m 12s, full screen as **Shadow of Death**, with sleeve title **The Emptiness All Around**.

THE SHORT NIGHT OF THE GLASS DOLLS

La corta notte delle bambole di vetro
La corta notte delle farfalle (Italy: alternate title 'The Short Night of the Butterfly')

Malastrana (Germany)

Unter dem Skalpell des Teufels (Germany: 'Under the Scalpel of the Devils')

Das Todes Syndrom (Germany: TV title 'The Death Syndrome')

Die Kurze Nacht der Schmetterlinge (Germany: alternate title)

Kratka Noc Leptira (Yugoslavia)

Je suis vivant! (France 'I Am Alive!')

Short Night (Holland: video sleeve title only)

Paralyzed (USA: video re-title)

Butterfly By Night (overseas sales title?)

Catalepsis

1972 Italy/West Germany/Yugoslavia

Technicolor Techniscope 97m

Production Company: Doria G. Film

(Rome)/Dieter Geissler Filmproduktion

(Munich)/Jadran Film (Zagreb) in association

with Dunhill Cinematografica (Rome)

Director: Aldo Lado

Producer: Enzo Doria (Enzo Passadore)

Story and Screenplay: Aldo Lado

Script Collaborator: Ruediger Von Spiehs

Cinematographer: Giuseppe Ruzzolini

Editor: Mario Morra

Art Directors: Gisella Longo, Zeliko Senecic

Music: Ennio Morricone

Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: Flavia Vanin

Cast: Ingrid Thulin (*Jessica*), Jean Sorel

(*Gregory Moore*), Mario Adorf (*Jack*

McPherson), Barbara Bach (*Mira Svoboda*),

Fabian Sovagovic (*Professor Karting*), José

Quaglio (*Valinski, minister of the interior*), Relja

Basic, Piero Vida (*Commissar Kirkov*), Daniele

Dubolino (*doctor*), Sven Lasta, Luciano Catenacci

(*morgue attendant*), Micaela Martin, Semka

Sokolovic, Sergio Serafini (*second morgue*

attendant), Franca Sciutti, Jurgen Drews (*singer*

at bridge), Franca Sciutto (*Nastassja, Moore's*

neighbour), Hrvoje Svob (*old man*), Joza Seb

(*park sweeper*), Petar Dumcic (*Franz Tibor,*

musicist), Riki Brzeska (*Pierre*), Velimir Bosnjak

(*journalist*), Petar Buntic (*spy*), Ivo Kadic (*wait-*

er)

Gregory Moore, an American journalist, is discovered, apparently dead but actually catatonic, lying in a park in Prague. Via flashbacks it is



Italian sleeve for 'Slaughter Hotel'

revealed how he came to be in this unfortunate position. Moore's Czech girlfriend Mira, who collects butterflies, vanishes one night. The writer and his colleagues, Jessica and Jack, investigate her disappearance and encounter resistance from the local authorities. It soon becomes obvious that many other young people have vanished in the city...

The fear of catalepsy (of being considered dead when you are very much alive and unable to speak out) was one of Poe's nightmare scenarios. But although this rare condition is central to **Short Night**... the film also exploits a more prevalent predicament, the fear of political repression, represented in this case by Communism. The analogy is obvious and very poignant, and the metaphors continue with the images of butterflies preserved behind glass. However, this is not a heavy-handed statement movie and the thriller-horror elements take precedent over the subtext. Even seemingly innocent details, such as Gregory's comment that "I'd better rescue Mira from the bodysnatchers" when he notices the aged party guests who flock round his attractive partner, are loaded with meaning which soon becomes apparent. Naturally, the viewer identifies with Sorel's motionless body on the slab as the story builds to a genuinely gripping climax. Morricone's score, which sounds like a mix of purring female vocals and the groans and moans of bodies in eternal damnation, is

another superior contribution which adds to the overall sense of paranoia. This is a unique thriller which demands to be seen by a wider audience.

Video:

France: VIP - letterboxed as **Je suis vivant!**

Greece: Joy Video - full screen as **The Short Night of the Glass Dolls**.

Holland: Cinehollywood - full screen except for pre-credits and opening credits which are letterboxed, Dutch subtitles as **The Short Night of the Glass Dolls**; Manhattan - taken from Cinehollywood master as **The Short Night of the Glass Dolls**.

Italy: GVC - **La corta notte delle bambole di vetro**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Fantafestival CD.

SLAUGHTER HOTEL

La bestia uccide a sangue freddo ('The Beast Kills in Cold Blood')

Cold Blooded Beast (English language title)

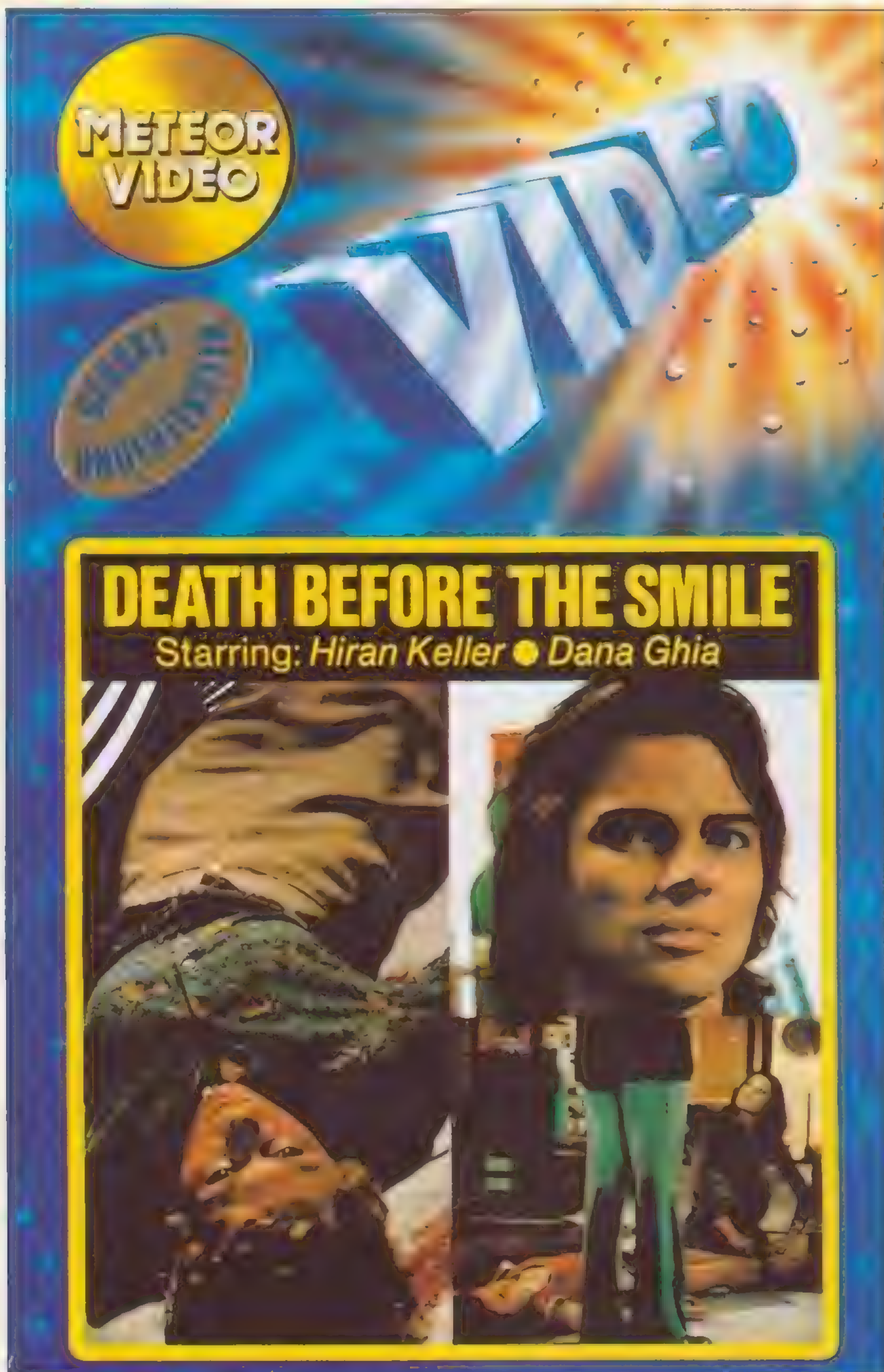
Les poupées sanglantes du Docteur X

(Belgium: 'The Bloody Dolls of Doctor X')

Les insatisfaites poupées erotiques du Dr.

Hichcock (France: 'The Insatiable Erotic Dolls of Dr. Hichcock')

La clinique des tenebres (France video re-



Danish sleeve for 'Smile Before Death'

title: 'The Clinic of Darkness')

La clinique des horreurs (France: video sleeve re-title 'The Clinic of Horrors')

Der Triebmorder (Germany 'The Sex Killer')

Das Schloss der Blauen Vogel (Germany: alternate title 'The Castle of the Blue Bird')

La bestia mata a sangre fria (Spain 'The Beast Kills in Cold Blood')

Asylum Erotica (USA: re-title)

Hotel Erotica (USA: re-title)

Hotel: Cold-Blooded Beast (Venezuela: video sleeve re-title)

1971 Italy Eastmancolor Telecolor scope 97m
Production Company: Cineproduzione Daunia 70

Director: Fernando Di Leo

Producers: Armando Novelli, Tizio Longo

Story: based on the novel by Heinz G. Konsalik

Screenplay: Fernando Di Leo, Nino Latino

Cinematographer: Franco Villa

Editor: Amedeo Giomini

Art Director: Nicola Tamburro

Music: Silvano Spadaccino

Assistant Director: Franco Lo Cascio

Cast: Klaus Kinski (*Doctor Francis Clay*),

Margaret Lee (*Cheryl*), Rosalba Neri (*Anne*),

John Ely (*gardener*), Monica Strebel, Jane Garret (*agoraphobic lesbian*), Gioia Desideri, Fernando Cerulli (*clinic chauffeur*), Sandro Rossi, Marco Mariani, Carla Mancini, John Karsen, Giulio Baraghini, Ettore Ceri, Antonio Radaelli, Piero Nistri, Franco Marletta.

A cloaked figure slips into an exclusive psychiatric clinic and murders one of the female patients. Meanwhile, various sexual liaisons are revealed. The mystery killer continues with his massacre: he beheads a nurse with a scythe, pushes a chauffeur into a spiked 'Iron Maiden', strangles an older female patient, kills a nymphomaniac with an axe, and shoots a lesbian through the neck with a crossbow. Doctor Clay and the police set a trap for the killer using one of the attractive female patients as bait. However, they are not prepared for the onslaught which follows...

Slaughter Hotel demands to be seen in all its scope glory. A cursory viewing of a full screen, dark video transfer several years ago failed to impress; however, as was the case with **The Lady in Red Kills Seven Times**, the German letterboxed release is an enlightening experi-

ence (and yes, you can actually see what's going on during the night scenes). Many rely heavily on style, as is the case in this empty-headed exercise in pure exploitation, and it's therefore essential that the 'look' of the film can be fully appreciated. The seductive scenes (including the laughable lesbian encounter) and mass slaughter take on a new dimension, propelling what had seemed like a slow-moving cross between Sixties Gothic, Seventies sleaze and a plain old whodunnit into a ballet of naked breasts, boning, buff and blood! And the outrageous climax, in which the demented killer lays into a gaggle of terrified female staff with a mace, is fitting over-the-top. As was the case with many of the trash roles, Klaus Kinski seems to be going through the motions merely for the pay cheque (something he would have doubtless arrogantly admitted) but Rosalba Neri proves yet again that she is one of the most appealing and talented actresses in the genre.

Video:

Belgium and France: Farah Film Video - letterboxed, includes inserts of near hardcore female masturbation as **Les insatisfaites poupees erotiques du Dr. Hitchcock**.

France: VIP - letterboxed, includes inserts of near hardcore female masturbation as **Les poupees sanglantes du Docteur X**; Initial same as the VIP release as **La clinique des horreurs**;

Germany: VPS - 80m 00s, letterboxed at 2:05 as **Der Triebmorder**.

Greece: PVP.

Italy: Domovideo - as **La bestia uccide a sangue freddo**; Video Ciak - as **La bestia uccide a sangue freddo**.

USA: MPI/Gorgon - uncut as **Slaughter Hotel**; Amvest - as **Asylum Erotica**; Nostalgic Merchant; Meteor.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero CD - *Murder For Pleasure. Giallo and Thriller Themes* - two opening themes are on this compilation.

SMILE BEFORE DEATH

Il sorriso della Jena ('The Smile of the Hyena')

Death Before the Smile (Denmark: video sleeve title)

Le rire de la hyene (France)

La sonrisa de la hiena (Spain)

Finnish sleeve for 'Smile Before Death'



1972 Italy Kodak Eastmancolor Technospes
Cinescope 88m
Production Company: Domizia
Cinematografica/Condor International
Production
Director: Silvio Amadio
Producer (uncredited): Silvio Amadio
Story: Silvio Amadio, Francesco Merli
Screenplay: Silvio Amadio, Francesco Villa,
Francesco Orazio Di Dio
Cinematography: Silvano Ippoliti
Editor: Francesco Bertuccioli
Music: Bob Derament
Cast: Luciana Della Robbia (*Nancy Thompson*),
Silvano Tranquilli (*Marco*), Rosalba Neri (*Gena*),
Hiram Keller, Dana Ghia, Zora Gheorghieva,
Antonio Luigi Guerra, Fabio Garriba, Sidney
Chaplin.

A middle-aged woman, Dorothy Emerson, dies a violent death. A police report concludes that she committed suicide by slashing her throat with a shard of glass. A teenage girl, Nancy Thompson, unexpectedly arrives at her dead mother's country villa. She meets Gena, a photographer and Dorothy's former best friend who has been living in the villa, and they make up a friendship. It soon becomes obvious that Gena and Marco, Dorothy's husband and Nancy's stepfather (although he has never met her) are having a relationship. The teenage girl's natural charm intoxicates the older pair and sexual jealousies soon arise. But more significantly, having been alerted by the housekeeper Magda, Nancy begins to suspect that her mother's death may not have been suicide.

Obviously influenced by deceit-ridden thrillers like *Paranoia* and *A Quiet Place to Kill*, Amadio's delightful film is an object lesson in why audiences should never trust what they see and hear in *gialli*. A detailed review would entail too many of the pleasurable twists that you must wait, and suffice to say that this is an excellent cinematic treat which benefits from an underlying sense of perversity. The leads are all excellent - Tranquilli has never been slimmer and Neri proves once again that she can act the part off most Euro-femmes - but special mention must go to Luciana Della Robbia who convincingly goes from being a seemingly sweet temptress to a sexual predator with a surprising agenda. But what really makes *Smile Before Death* compulsive entertainment is Bob Derament's infectious theme music which features some groovy organ twiddling with delicious vocals by Edda Della Orso. Once this creepy aural orgasm is stuck in your head, you're hooked for life!

Video:

Mark: Meteor - 84m 42s, letterboxed with above title *Death Before the Smile*.

SO SWEET, SO DEAD

Rivelazione di un maniaco sessuale al capo della squadra mobile

(Revelations of a Sex Maniac By the Head of the Flying Squad')

La peur au ventre (France 'The Fear in the Stomach')

Schon Nacht und Liebestoll (Germany 'Already Night My Sweetheart')

Revelaciones de un maniaco sexual (Spain 'Revelations of a Sex Maniac')

The Slasher (USA)

The Slasher is the Sex Maniac (USA: alternate title)

Penetration (USA: hardcore version)

Bad Girls (?)

1972 Italy Eastmancolor Telecolor 90m

Production Company: P.C.R. (Produzione Cinematografiche Romane)

Director: Roberto [Bianchi] Montero

Producer: Eugenio Florimonte

Story: Luigi Angelo, Italo Fasan

Screenplay: Luigi Angelo, Italo Fasan, Roberto [Bianchi] Montero

Cinematography: Fausto Rossi

Editor: Rolando Salvatori

Art Director: Massimo Bolongaro

'So Sweet, So Dead' Italian locandina poster

UNA PRODUZIONE EUGENIO FLORIMONTE PER LA P.C.R. - PRODUZIONI CINEMATOGRAFICHE ROMANE
FARLEY GRANGER - SYLVA KOSCINA IN



RIVELAZIONI DI UN MANIACO SESSUALE AL CAPO DELLA SQUADRA MOBILE

SILVANO ANNABELLA CHRIS FEMI KRISTA
TRANQUILLI - INCONTRERA - AVRAM - BENUSSI - NELL

ANGELA COVELLO - FABRIZIO MORESCO - LUCIANO ROSSI - ANDREA SCOTTI - IVANO STACCIOLI

BRUNO BOSCHETTI (D.S.G.) - BENITO STEFANELLI - IRENE POLLMER - NINO FOTI

JESSICA DUBLIN PHILIPPE MERSENT - PAUL OXON SUSAN SCOTT LUIGI ANGELO ITALO FASAN
GIORGIO GASLINI ANGELO FACCENNA MARIO PELLEGRINO ROBERTO MONTERO
(EDIZIONI RIXIO - SAM)

Music: Giorgio Gaslini

Cast: Farley Granger (*Inspector Capuana*), Sylva Koscina (*Barbara Capuana*), Silvano Tranquilli (*Paolo Santangeli*), Annabella Incontrera (*Franca Santangeli*), Chris Avram (*Professor Casali, a pathologist*), Femi Benussi (*Serena*), Krista Nell, Angela Covello, Fabrizio Moresco, Andrea Scotti (*Sandro*), Irene Pollmer, Luciano Rossi (*Gastone, the morgue attendant*), Ivano Staccioli, Nino Foti, Jessica Dublin (*Rossella*), Paul Oxon, Philippe Hersent, Susan Scott [Nieves Navarro] (*Lilly*), Bruno Boschetti, Benito Stefanelli, Luigi Ciavarro, Sandro Pizzorro (*Roberto*).

Additional cast in hardcore inserts in the re-edited U.S. **Penetration** version: Kim Pope, Marc Stevens, Harry Reems, Tina Russell.

In a provincial city, two "well-to-do" women are butchered. Photographs left by the women's bodies indicate that they were having extra-marital relationships and imply that their killer is punishing them for immoral behaviour. Pathologist Professor Casali suggests that the murderer is impotent and seeks to possess women with a different (phallic) weapon. More unfaithful women are killed and the police seem at a loss to solve the mystery. In the meantime, Inspector Capuana discovers that his own wife is having an affair. He uncovers the killer's identity and sets a trap in which his deceitful spouse will be the maniac's final victim...

Aside from a faintly ridiculous sequence in which the black-clad killer (a **Blood and Black Lace** clone if ever there was one) chases one of his victims across a deserted beach, **So Sweet, So Dead** is presented in a matter-of-fact manner by Roberto Bianchi Montero. Even so, Fausto Rossi's cinematography is clear and unobtrusive and the veteran director wastes no opportunity to show naked female flesh and the gory handiwork of the "inhuman" maniac. Sharing the same dubious reactionary stance

as **The New York Ripper**, this is the kind of *giallo* which draws accusations of misogyny. So even the inspector's own wife is shown to be a harlot, falling for the charms of a younger man, and prompting the weary inspector's vengeance. As a consequence, the film seems less concerned with revealing the killer's identity than other *gialli*. But fans will find it difficult to resist the nudity quota and blatant bloodshed, while there are some wonderfully tacky moments involving characters like the sweaty morgue attendant who has an obsession with corpses bordering on necrophilia. Moreover, this sleazy package is gift-wrapped by Giorgio Gaslini's sublime themes which, although farcically overused, effortlessly draw the viewer in. It only remains to note (in case anyone out there is unaware of it) the jaw-droppingly inappropriate insertion of hardcore footage which unscrupulous American distributors added for a re-edited release called **Penetration**, billed as 'The Ultimate X-Crime'. The unwarranted intrusion of (doubtlessly) unattractive hardcore humping no doubt renders the film totally incomprehensible and even more dubious as entertainment.

Video:

Greece: Cinehollywood - letterboxed, 1.75:1, washed out colours.

Japan: Toho Video - letterboxed at almost 2.35:1, good colour resolution, Japanese subtitles as **So Sweet, So Dead**.

Sweden: Walthers/Cinehollywood - slightly letterboxed at 1.66:1.

UK: VPD - slightly letterboxed as **So Sweet, So Dead**.

USA: Monterey/After Hours - cut as **So Sweet, So Dead**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero - *Murder For Pleasure: Giallo and Thriller Themes* CD compilation - title theme.

SO SWEET... SO PERVERSE

Così dolce... così perversa

Si douces, si perverses (France 'So Sweet, So Perverse')

Die Susse Sunderin (Germany 'The Sweet Sinner')

Dulce para matar... perversa para amar (Spain 'Sweet For Killing... Perverse For Love' 1969 Italy/France/Germany Eastmancolor Cromoscope 92m)

Production Company: Zenith

Cinematografica/Flora Film/Tritone

Filmindustria (Rome)/C.E.D.I.C. (Paris)/Rapid Film (Munich)

Director: Umberto Lenzi

Producers: Mino Loy, Luciano Martino

Story: Luciano Martino

Story Adaptation: Massimo D'Avack

Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi

Cinematography: Memmo [Guglielmo] Mancini

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Music: Riz Ortolani

Cast: Carroll Baker (*Nicole Perrier*), Jean-Louis Trintignant (*Jean Reynaud*), Erika Blanc (*Erika Bianchi Colombatto*) (*Danielle*), Horst Frank (*Klaus*), Helga Liné (*Helene Valmont*), Ermelinda De Felice (*hotel proprietor*), Gianfranco De Benedetti (*Monsieur Valmont*), Irio Fantini, Marcello Bonini Olas, Gianni Pulone, Lucio Rama, Luca Sportelli (*party guest*), Dario Michaelis (*police inspector*), Renato Pinciroli (*porter*), Beryl Cunningham (*stripper*), Paola Scalzi (*Helene's friend*), Francois Flange

Paris. Rich socialites Jean and Danielle are experiencing marital problems. Jean hears a woman being assaulted in the apartment above and investigates. He encounters Nicole, a seemingly frightened woman who is under the control of her domineering boyfriend Klaus, and is drawn into a relationship. However, it emerges that Nicole was used as bait in a trap set by Klaus, who was apparently paid twenty-thousand dollars to kill Jean. In the meantime Nicole claims to have actually fallen in love



JACQUES PAUL BERTRAND
PRESENTA

CARROLL BAKER • JEAN-LOUIS TRINTIGNANT

**si douces
si perverses**

EASTMANCOLOR

NEW VIDEO

CECIC



Above and Left: 'So Sweet...So Perverse'

their victim. But Klaus kills Jean and burns the body to make it look like he died in a car accident. It transpires that Nicole and Danielle conspired to kill Jean for his money. Now that the fatally dead Danielle begins to feel remorse, Nicole's ingenious plan moves into top

So Sweet... So Perverse is a prime example of the slick thrillers which producers Mino Loy and Luciano Martino assembled during the heyday of *giallo* cinema. This tale of intrigue, lust and murder is tautly scripted by Gastaldi (though those looking for the perversity alluded to in the title will be sorely disappointed), competently directed by Lenzi and well-edited by Alabiso. Future *giallo* maestro Sergio Martino was an executive producer. Ortolani provides a memorable, sweeping ballad "Why?" (which later turned up in Lenzi's *Seven Bloodstained Orchids*). To top it off, a chosen cast perform their roles superbly. There is the added appeal of Beryl Segal as a vivacious stripper.

Video:

VHS - as *Si douces, si perverses*.
 Video Screen Play - 88m 56s, full Greek subtitles, good quality print as *So Sweet... So Perverse*.
 DVD Realvision - as *Così' dolce... così' perversa*.

Soundtrack:

ES single; EMI compilation LP features the score.

LA SORELLA DI URSULA

(The Sister)
La muerte tiene ojos (Spain: video title 'Death Has To Be Seen')
 Eastmancolor Kodak Telecolor

Production Company: Supercine
 Screenplay: Enzo Milioni
 Director: Armando Bertuccioli

Story and Screenplay: Enzo Milioni
 Cinematography: Vittorio Bernini
 Editors: Francesco Bertuccioli, Franco Di Pietro
 Art Director: Natalia Verdelli
 Music: Mimmi Uva
 Assistant Director: Paolo Vidal
 Cast: Barbara Magnolfi (*Ursula*), Stefania D'Amario (*Dagmar*), Vanni Materassi (*Roberto*), Marc Porel (*Gianni Nardi*), Anna Zinneman, Antiniska Nemour, Yvonne Harlow, Giancarlo Zanetti (*Filippo*), Alice Gherardi, Roberto De Ruggeriis (sic).

Ursula and her sensitive sister Dagmar check into a seaside hotel. A black-gloved individual murders a young couple while they are making love and sets about killing any hotel guests who have sex. The killer violates female victims with a clay dildo. A police inspector, who is attempting to arrest a drug trafficker, discovers that Dagmar has had premonitions about each murder...

This film's central premise, a murderer who kills with a large phallus, is a typically perverse Italian idea (*Rings of Fear*'s schoolgirl victim also suffers from being dildoe to death!). Aside from the sordid demises and some ridiculous close-ups of the killer's eyes, the film offers graphic sex scenes which border on hardcore (not unsurprisingly, a version with porno inserts was also released). *La sorella* is reminiscent of Jesus Franco's early Seventies films - the seaside locations, stucco architecture, the blank stare of Ursula - although thankfully it has higher production values. Mimmi Uva's score mixes delicious female vocals with funky interludes and a typically daft song. "Your eyes are all my life, and they know how to make me die. That's why I love your eyes."

Video:

Italy - CVR Realvision - cut, letterboxed as *La sorella di Ursula*.

SPASMO

('Spasm')

Grusom Dod (Denmark: video sleeve title 'Gruesome Death')

Misterios de um jovem rico (Portugal)

1974 Italy Technospes scope 93m

Production Company: UTI Produzioni Cinematiche

Director: Umberto Lenzi

Producer: Ugo Tucci

Story: Pino Boller

Screenplay: Massimo Franciosa, Luisa

Montagnana, Pino Boller, Umberto Lenzi

Cinematographer: Guglielmo Mancori

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Director: Giacomo Calò Carducci

Music and Music Director: Ennio Morricone

Assistant Director: Alessandro Metz

Cast: Robert Hoffman (*Christian Bauman*), Suzy

Kendall (*Barbara*), Ivan Rassimov (*Fritz*

Bauman), Adolfo Lastretti (*Torres*), Maria Pia

Conté, Franco Silva (*Luca*), Monica Monet

(*Clorinda*), Guido Alberti (*Malcolm*), Mario

Erpichini (*Alex*), Luigi Antonio Guerra, Rosita

Torosh.

Christian and his girlfriend are shocked to find a woman hanging from a tree. On closer inspection, however, the 'corpse' turns out to be a life-size latex doll. The pair soon make another macabre discovery: a woman lying face down on the beach, apparently dead. The woman, Barbara, turns out to be alive and promptly disappears. Christian meets her again at a yacht party and they immediately begin a relationship. As they prepare to go to bed together, a mysterious man breaks in and in the ensuing fight, Christian kills the stranger with his own gun. Shaken by the experience, the couple hide-out in an apparently deserted house...

"It's all so absurd. Meaningless" opines Robert Hoffman's confused character Christian. One of the most convoluted thrillers to emanate from Italy. *Spasmo* either fascinates or annoys depending upon your viewpoint. This is another



er film which is difficult to review without revealing any of the plot twists. Initially, it seems that Christian (one of Hoffman's better performances) is a victim of a scheme to frame him or even drive him insane. But as you might expect, there are some ludicrous revelations which leave the viewer as perplexed as the protagonist. The dialogue is either daft ("I have a razor in my room. Big, sharp and sexy") or supposedly 'significant' (characters don't hold conversations, they make statements). But does it really matter? One of the pleasures of *giallo* cinema is allowing yourself to become immersed in the most ridiculous of plots, in nonsensical situations where every other character seems to be a red herring, where sexual encounters are fraught with danger and, when finally revealed, the psychological motivations of the murderer(s) are often hilariously improb-

able. And despite its flawed narrative construction, **Spasmo** offers some memorably odd imagery - such as the female mannequins hanging from trees with knives stuck into them - and one of Morricone's best scores, which perfectly complements the disorientating drama that unfolds. George Romero was apparently hired by the film's US distributors to add a few touches of violence to what was obviously thought to be a lacklustre thriller.

Video:

Australia: THG
Denmark: Polygram/Hem Video Film - as **Spasmo** with sleeve title **Grusom Dod**.
Germany: Greenwood Film - 89m 52s, slightly letterboxed as **Spasmo**.
Holland: EFO Studio - full screen, Dutch subtitles; Video Media - 90m 11s, full screen, blue-

tinged dark transfer, large subtitles as **Spasmo**.
Italy: PAC; Lineafilm; Domovideo - letterboxed as **Spasmo**.

Portugal: Imavideo - letterboxed as **Spasmo**.
Sweden: Hemvideo - 89m 11s: cut (some swearing is missing, the fight scenes are shorter and the film cuts when Christian runs over Tatum, letterboxed, Swedish subtitles as **Spasmo**.

UK: Diplomat - 89m 32s, full screen as **Spasmo**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: RCA single with two tracks; RCA LP; RCA CD on a double-bill with **Cosa avete fatto a Solange?**

SPIRITS OF DEATH

Un bianco vestito per Mariale ('A White Dress for Mariale')

Paranoia (Belgium)

Exorcisme tragique - Les monstres se mettent a table (France 'Tragic Exorcism - The Monsters Are Sat at the Table')

Lo muerta espera (Venezuela 'Death Waits')

1972 Italy Technicolor Cinescope 89m

Production Company: KMG Cinema

Director: Romano Scavolini

Producer: Franca Luciani

Story: Giuseppe Mangione

Screenplay: Giuseppe Mangione, Remigio De Grosso

Cinematography: Romano Scavolini

Editor: Francesco Bertuccioli

Art Director: Emiliano Tolve

Music: Fiorenzo Carpi

Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Assistant Director: Arduino Sacco

Cast: Evelyn Stewart (Ida Galli) (*Mariale/Mariale's mother*), Luigi Pistilli (*Paolo, Mariale's husband*), Ivan Rassimov (*Massimo*), Pilar Velasquez (*Mercedes*), Edilio Kim (*Gustavo*), Gengher Gatti (*Osvaldo*), Giancarlo Bonuglia (*Jo*), Gianni Dei (*Mariale's mother's lover*), Ezio Marano, Shawn Robinson (*Semy*), Carla Mancini, Franco Calogero, Bruno Boschetti.

The past: A married woman and her young lover are making love in the woods, when they are caught by her husband. He shoots them both dead and then commits suicide. The tragedy is witnessed by the woman's young daughter Mariale.

The present: Fragile Mariale lives with her husband Paolo in a large gothic mansion. She submits to the sedatives he regularly administers but she nonetheless manages to invite a group of friends to their secluded home. A masked banquet degenerates into an orgy and the guests are murdered one by one...

This is a warped, psychedelic horror thriller with Bava-like touches. Anyone with even a vague sense of genre awareness will guess the killer's identity right from the start.

Nevertheless, the film goes through the seemingly obligatory role-playing before the supposedly startling final revelation. Director Romano Scavolini later made the overlong and depressing **Nightmares in a Damaged Brain** which became one of the 'video nasties'. Villainous-looking Gengher Gatti was also **The Devil's Wedding Night**. Assistant director Arduino Sacco later became a director.

Video:

Belgium and France: Cine Loisirs - 81m 29s, letterboxed as **Paranoia**.

France: VIP - as **Exorcisme Tragique**.

Italy: CVR Realvision - letterboxed as **Un bianco vestito per Mariale**.

Venezuela: label unknown - in Italian with Spanish subtitles as **Lo muerta espera**.

SQUILLO

('A Telephone Ring' or 'Call-Girl' - it has a double-meaning)

1996 Italy scope 100m

Production Company: Clemi Cinematografica S.r.l.

Director: Carlo Vanzina

Producer: Giovanni Di Clemente

Story and Screenplay: Carlo Vanzina, Enrico Vanzina, Franco Ferrini
 Cinematography: Luigi Kuveiller
 Editor: Sergio Montanari
 Art Director: Tonino Zera
 Music: Pino Donaggio
 Cast: Raz Degan (*Toni Messina*), Jennifer Driver (*Maria*), Bianca Koedam (*Eva*), Paul Freeman (*Marco*), Antonio Ballerio (*Fabio*), Alessandra Dotti (*Sonia*), Pia Klover (*Barbara*), Luigi Montini (*Simone*), Caterina Rebracca (*Rita*), Yanai Degan (*Salvatore*).

Maria, a provincial Polish girl, travels to Milan to pay her older sister Eva a surprise visit. The sisters haven't seen each other in seven years, and Eva has changed a lot. She lives in a luxurious apartment and dresses in designer clothes. Although she pretends to be an interpreter, Eva is actually a call-girl and, one night, fails to return from an appointment. Maria enquires at the hotel where Maria last worked. Eva's body

is soon found. The investigation is conducted by Inspector Messina, a trendy cop. Maria and Messina become an inseparable investigating team. Maria poses as a call-girl in order to reveal her sister's killer and they use mobile phones to keep in touch.

This *giallo nuovo*, with its emphasis on personal organisers and mobile 'phones, is a continuation of themes the Vanzinas had previously explored in their slick thriller *Mystere*. But this prostitutes-in-peril story is an altogether more satisfying movie because it's more rooted in reality (the film is based upon a real-life political scandal). So even Raz Degan's potentially annoying designer cop, who drives a vintage Porsche, is a more solid character than Colt in the aforementioned thriller. And judging by the Italian pirate tape under review (thankfully letterboxed in its correct ratio), *Squillo* has impressive production values, with excellent cinematography by Luigi Kuveiller (a return to form) and a full-blown Hitchcock/De Palma-type

score by Pino Donaggio. It's a shame when an ambitious but failed film like *The Stendhal Syndrome* (coincidentally co-written by Ferrini) can get a quick video release in the UK, and a perfectly sound, easy-to-market thriller like *Squillo* remains largely unseen.

Video:

Italy: Medusa - as *Squillo*.

STAGEFRIGHT

Deliria

Stage Fright - Aquarius

Bloody Bird (France)

1985 Italy Fuji Color LV (Luciano Vittori)

Dolby stereo 90m

Production Company: Filmirage

Director: Michael [Michele] Soavi (with uncredited contributions by Aristide Massaccesi)

Producer (Uncredited): Aristide Massaccesi

Story and Screenplay: Lew Cooper [Luigi Montefiori]

Additional Dialogue: Sheila Goldberg

Cinematographer: Renato Tafuri

Editor: Kathleen Stratton [Rosanna Landi]

Music: Simon Boswell

Cast: David Brandon (*Peter, director of stage-play*), Barbara Cupisti (*Alicia*), Don Fiore (*police chief*), Robert Gligorov (*Danny*), Mickey Knox (*old cop*), John Morgen [Giovanni Lombardo Radice] (*Brett*), Clain Parker (*Irving Wallace*), Lori Parrel (*Corinne*), Martin Phillips (*Mark*), James E.R. Sampson (*Willy*), Ulrike Schwerk (*Betty*), Mary Sellers (*Laurel*), Jo Anne Smith (*Sybil*), Piero Vida (*Ferrari, the producer*), Richard Berkeley (*Doctor Porter*), Sheila Goldberg (*nurse*).

Uncredited Cast: Michele Soavi (*young cop*), cat (*Lucifer*).

A street hooker is revealed to be an actress in a musical which is in rehearsal for its opening a week later. The play concerns an anonymous maniac who wears an owl costume.

Meanwhile, a real homicidal killer escapes from a nearby psychiatric clinic and murders one of the stage hands. The unscrupulous director decides to capitalise on the grim news by incorporating the psychopathic killer's identity, Irving Wallace, into the play's storyline. He locks the cast in the sound stage and hides the only key. Unfortunately, Wallace has managed to slip into the theatre unnoticed...

Despite being yet another cliché-ridden stalk 'n' slasher, *Stagefright* manages to rise about its humble origins. The combination of Soavi's keen eye for detail and Massaccesi's business-like desire to turn out a low-budget (but polished) horror product, makes for a genuinely effective movie. Because the film takes place largely on a soundstage, the viewer is always aware of the artifice at work but is nevertheless drawn in by the strong performances (Brandon, Cupisti and Morghen all shine in their roles), the fast-paced narrative and the gory deaths (utilising a syringe, a pick-axe, a knife, a drill, a chainsaw, and an axe - this killer likes variety!). The scene when the heroine attempts to extract a glinting gold key which is wedged between floorboards, just a couple of metres away from the maniac, is superb. And although the killer's identity is apparent throughout, there is a typical twist at the end. Unlike that other copycat production *Body Count*, this is a superior spaghetti-splatter interpretation of an American horror sub-genre.

Video:

France: Avoriaz-Gobbi/GCR - as *Bloody Bird*.

Germany: label unknown.

Italy: AVO Film - as *Deliria*.

Japan: label unknown - as *Aquarius*.

UK: Avatar - 86m 24s: cut by 4 seconds (shots of the drill bit exiting a man's chest) with a BBFC '18' certificate as *Stagefright*;

Redemption - 86m 16s, with a BBFC '18' certificate, letterboxed at 1.45:1, stereo as

Stagefright - Aquarius. Unfortunately, the front sleeve image is one of their worst.

USA: Imperial as *Stagefright*.

Soundtrack:

Germany: Lucertola Media CD - as *Deliria*.



AQUARIUS

PREMIO DEL MIEDO
FESTIVAL DE AVORIAZ '87



DAVID BRANDON BARBARA CUPISTI

ROBERT GLIGOROV MARTIN PHILIPS ULRIKE SCHWERK MARY SELLERS JO ANNE SMITH

Guión de LEW COOPER Música de SIMON BOSWELL Dirigido por MICHAEL SOAVI Producida por FILMIRAGE INC

Presentado por CONTRAPLANO

Left: Shattering artwork for 'Stagefright'

THE STENDHAL SYNDROME

La sindrome di Stendhal ('The Stendhal Syndrome')

1996 Italy Kodak Technicolor Technovision
Dolby stereo Digital 118m

Production Company: Medusa Film/Cine 2000

Director: Dario Argento

Producer: Dario Argento, Giuseppe Colombo

Story: Dario Argento, Franco Ferrini based on the novel *The Stendhal Syndrome* by Graziella Magherini

Screenplay: Dario Argento

Cinematography: Giuseppe Rotunno

Editor: Angelo Nicolini

Art Director: Antonello Geleng

Music and Music Director: Ennio Morricone

Special Effects: Sergio Stivaletti

Cast: Asia Argento (*Inspector Anna Manni*),

Thomas Kretschmann (*Alfredo Grossi*), Marco

Leonardi (*Marco Longhi*), Luigi Diberti (*Chief*

Inspector Manetti), Julien Lambroschini (*Marie*),

John Quentin (*Anna's father*), Franco Diogene

(*victim's husband*), Sonia Topazio (*victim in*

Florence), Antonio Marziantonio (*museum*

watchman), Lucia Stara (*shop assistant*), Paolo

Bonacelli (*Doctor Cavanna*), Lorenzo Crespi

(*Giulio*), Vera Gamma (*policewoman*), John

Pedefferri (*hydraulic engineer*), Veronica Lazar

(*Marie's mother*), Diano Mario (*coroner*),

Eleonora Vizzini (*Anna as a child*), Maximilian

Nisi (*Luigi*), Leonardo Ferrantini (*Alessandro*).

Inspector Anna Manni, a young police detective, is sent to Florence to track down a vicious rapist/serial killer. While taking in the cultural heritage of Florence, Anna experiences the phenomenon known as 'Stendhal's Syndrome' (when great works of art can overwhelm the viewer and cause mental collapse). In this state, she unwittingly encounters the killer.

Unfortunately, he later rapes her in a hotel room. Anna is traumatised and upon her return to Rome she is unable to relate to her boyfriend or settle back into police work. She takes a break in Viterbo, her home town, but the killings continue...

Having been hyped up as the director's return to form (and to his native Italy following the much-maligned *Trauma*, his Stateside experiment), *The Stendhal Syndrome* disappointed many Argento fans even more because all the omens seemed good. The overt sadism mentioned in advance publicity is undoubtedly well in evidence, and no-one can deny the film's sexual violence is shocking, the squirm-inducing scenes in which psycho Grossi rapes Anna being the nastiest stuff the director has ever tackled. And if nothing else, the film proves to be fertile ground for those who seek to analyse the director's psychological profile - there can't be many fathers who would depict their daughter being abused in such a manner! There are also some of the impressive visuals for which the bravura director is rightly famous (especially the female protagonist's visions), however these strong elements are lost within an over-long, and ultimately unsatisfying narrative which finally leaves most viewers shuffling their feet rather than feeling exhilarated. The first real signs of the film going off the rails are Anna's repeated visits to her psychiatrist, which are painfully slow. And certain aspects of the film are just plain awkward or embarrassingly ill-conceived. These include an almost parodic sequence in which a slutish shop assistant is picked up by the killer (whose voice inexplicably becomes a curious gargle, worse than the *New York Ripper's* duck impressions); a pointless computer-generated image of pills entering Anna's throat; an unconvincing scene in which Anna turns on her boyfriend; and worst of all, the stupid blonde wig Asia wears for the second half of the film. Although some of these details may seem like minor quibbles, added together they weaken the film as a whole and stick in the mind afterwards. Although repeated viewings have improved my opinion of *Phenomena* and *Trauma*, several attempts to see this film in a better light have failed to change my dislike of it. But to end on a positive note, Morricone was clearly pleased to



be working with Argento again because he delivers one of his most lyrical themes.

Video:

Italy: Medusa - full screen as *La sindrome di Stendhal*.

Japan: Columbia Video - full screen as *The Stendhal Syndrome*.

UK: Fox Guild Home Entertainment - 110m 39s; abridged by 2m 47s by the video company, with a BBFC '18' certificate as *The Stendhal Syndrome*.

Soundtrack:

Italy: CAM CD - live concert of Morricone's

compositions includes *The Stendhal Syndrome*.

STRIP NUDE FOR YOUR KILLER

Nude per l'assassino ('Naked Women for the Killer')

Der Geheimnis Volle Killer (Germany 'The Full Mystery Killer')

Desnuda ante el asesino (Spain 'Nude in the Presence of the Killer')

1975 Italy Eastmancolor Technovision 118m 93m

Production Company: Fral Cinematografica



EDWIGE FENECH • NINO CASTELNUOVO

NUDE PER L'ASSASSINO

CON FERMI BENUSSI • SOLVI STUBING e con AMANDA • FRANCO DIOGENE • LUCIO COMO
REGIA DI ANDREA BIANCHI • MUSICA DI BERTO PISANO • SCENEGGIATURA DI MASSIMO FELISATTI



Director: Andrea Bianchi
Story: Andrea Bianchi
Screenplay: Massimo Felisatti
Cinematography: Franco Delli Colli
Editor: Francesco Bertuccioli
Art Director: Rossella Guarna
Music and Music Director: Berto Pisano
Assistant Director: Daniele Sangiorgi
Cast: Edwige Fenech (*Marta/Magda*), Nino Castelnuovo (*Carlo Bianchi*), Femi Benussi (*Lucia Cerrazini*), Solvi Stubing (*Patrizia*), Amanda [Giuliana Cecchini] (*Gisela Montani*), Erna Schurer (*Doris*), Franco Diogene (*Maurizio Montani, Gisela's husband*), Lucio Como, Giani Airo', Silvana Depretto, Achille Gironi, Giuseppa Moschella, Filippo La Neva, Claudio Pellegrini, Wainer Verri, Rodolfo Zola.

Evelyn, a young fashion model, dies during a backstreet abortion in Milan. To avoid an investigation, Mario Castelli, the gynaecologist, arranges for her body to be taken home and placed in a bath of running water. Soon afterwards, Castelli is brutally stabbed to death by a mysterious figure wearing a crash helmet and

motorcycle leathers. Employees at Studio Albatross, the photographic agency where Evelyn worked, soon begin to die one by one... An above average entry from Andrea Bianchi, the director best known for the shuffling zombies in *Nights of Terror*. Considering the generally threadbare nature of his other work, this sleazy *giallo* is a pleasingly swish production which benefits from clear cinematography and Berto Pisano's sub-funk score. An excellent cast is bolstered by Euro pussycats Edwige Fenech, Femi Benussi and Erna Schurer. The identity of the heavy-breathing killer is not difficult to guess but the narrative is reasonably-paced, if slightly overlong, and the incestuous motive for the murders is rewardingly sordid. And in a change from the women-as-victims cliché, even Franco Diogene's obese character, who can only make it with his blow-up doll, ends up naked for the killer!

Video:

Germany: Exquisite Video - letterboxed as *Der Geheimnis Volle Killer*. The pre-credits abortion scene is missing.

Italy: New Pentax Film - 93m 43s, letterboxed the murder of Franco Diogene's character is missing due to a jump in the print, as *Nude per l'assassino*; Capitol as *Nude per l'assassino*; AVO Film - 93m 53s, letterboxed at 2:05:1 as *Nude per l'assassino*.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero CD 'Murder For Pleasure: Giallo and Thriller Themes' - this compilation contains the excellent title theme.

THE SWEET BODY OF DEBORAH

Il dolce corpo di Deborah ('The Sweet Body of Deborah')

L'adorable corps de Deborah (France 'The Adorable Body of Deborah')

La mort à l'écoute (France: video title 'The Dead Are Listening')

Married To Kill (Germany)

1967 Italy/France Eastmancolor Cromoscope 95m

Production Company: Zenith

Cinematografica/Flora Film (Rome)/Lux C.C.F (Paris)

Director: Romolo Guerrieri [Girolami]

Producers: Mino Loy, Luciano Martino

Story: Ernesto Gastaldi, Luciano Martino

Script: Ernesto Gastaldi

Cinematography: Marcello Masciocchi

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Director: Amedeo Fago

Music: Nora Orlandi

Music Director: Robby Poitevin

Assistant Director: Roberto Pariante

Cast: Carroll Baker (*Deborah*), Jean Sorel

(*Marcel*), Evelyn Stewart [Ida Galli] (*Suzanne*

Boileau), Luigi Pistilli (*Philip*), Michel Bardine:

(*police inspector*), Valentino Macchi (*mech*

Mirella Panfili, Domenico Ravenna, Giuseppe

Ravenna, Renato Montalbano, George Hiltor

(*Robert*).

Marcel and Deborah are on their honeymoon in Geneva, Marcel's home town. However, their marital bliss is disturbed by a chance encounter with Philip, who accuses Marcel of murdering his former lover Suzanne, back in the USA (she apparently committed suicide). Deborah receives a murder threat over the 'phone but when the engineers turn up to check the line is dead. To make matters worse, Suzanne's favourite classical piece keeps popping up repeatedly in their rented villa in Nice. Meanwhile, a voyeur is spying on the new weds from the neighbouring villa...

Left and Below: Italian video release artwork for 'Strip Nude for Your Killer'



EDWIGE FENECH • NINO CASTELNUOVO

NUDE PER L'ASSASSINO

Although it seems tame nowadays, in the late Sixties the openly sexual goings-on and the cruel actions of the calculating characters made **The Sweet Body of Deborah** a real eye-opener. A black exotic dancer does her routine in the film's opening minutes and there are brief glimpses of Baker topless and simulating an orgasm. **Sweet Body** is also an especially good showcase of the deception and intrigue which are endemic to *gialli*. To reveal even the merest of details would deny the first-time viewer this film's undoubted, if highly improbable, pleasures. Suffice to say, the cast of soon-to-be-*giallo*-regulars are a delight. The film also features some frightful fashions: Baker's cat-suits and Sorel's lime green sweater are particularly lurid but at least Evelyn Stewart gets to wear a shiny black number that will please fetishists. The curse of the dead lover's favourite tune was re-used in **Double Face**, while music as psychological torture also cropped up in Lenzi's first Baker vehicle **Orgasmo/Paranoia**. Besides this thriller, Girolami also contributed the noirish thriller **Un detective/Ring of Death** (1969), and the excellent **The Double** (1971).

Video:

France: Columbus; SPV - as **La mort a l'écoute**.

Greece: Key Video Production - full screen, in English with Greek subtitles, poor quality print and duplication as **The Sweet Body of Deborah**.

Germany: All Video - 91m 32s, letterboxed as **Married To Kill**.

Italy: label unknown.

Soundtrack

Italy: CAM LP with twelve tracks; CAM CD *'Il piacere della musica'* - this compilation features the title theme.

A TASTE FOR FEAR

Pathos (Un sapore di paura) ('Pathos (A Taste of Fear)')

Pathos - Segreta inquietudine (Italy: publicity title 'Pathos - Secret Anxiety')

Rausch der Begierde (Germany 'Intoxicated With Desire')

Obsession - A Taste for Fear (USA)

Video Killer (?)

1988 Italy Eastmancolor Kodak colore LV (Luciano Vittori) Dolby stereo 90m
Production Company: Exordia Corp.
S.r.l./Titanus Produzione S.p.A. in association with Reteitalia S.p.A.

Director: Piccio Raffanini

Executive Producer: Jacques Lipkau Goyard

Story: Jacques Lipkau Goyard

Screenplay: Lidia Ravera, Piccio Raffanini

Cinematography: Romano Albani

Editor: Mario Morra

Art Director: Paolo Biagetti

Music: Gabriele Ducros

Music Director: Bob Masala, Gabriele Ducros

Cast: Virginia Hey (*Diane*), Gerard Darmon, Gioia (Maria) Scola (*Valerie*), Carlo Mucari, Dario Parisini, Carin McDonald, Teagan Clive (*Teagan*), Eva Grimaldi (*one of George's models*), Kid Creole (*loan shark*), Patrick King, Giorgio Cerioni, Loredana Guerra, Marisa Parra, Eugenio Cartoni, Jo Ann Smith, Arnaldo Cosimi.

Diane, an arrogant photographer with lesbian tendencies, is appalled when one of her favourite models, a butch blonde named Teagan, is knifed to death. George, Diane's ex-boyfriend, makes S&M videos, and is the chief suspect because the victim was tied up and filmed. Valerie, Diane's devoted assistant is also a suspect because she is pathologically jealous of her employer's interest in other women. Teagan's flatmate Kim is soon killed too. Inspector John Arnold blames the degenerate lifestyle of the victims for their fate, noting that the knife is "just another form of penetration: the ultimate!" however, Arnold becomes drawn into their shallow world...

This designer *giallo* seems to be reviled by just about everyone who has seen it. The unappealing, clichéd characters (a cop with - you

guessed it - designer stubble), the glossy façade, the bland rock numbers, the meaningful voice-overs and the pointless slightly-futuristic settings (Virginia Hey cruises around in an open-top electric car) leave most viewers cold. Director Raffanini's background in rock videos is evident throughout the film, particularly in the over-reliance on supposedly atmospheric lighting and set design. Hey's assertive character, laughably described as "a cat in heat" at one point, is merely annoying, just like the film itself.

Video:

Germany: Arcade - as **Rausch der Begierde**.
Holland: RCA/Columbia Pictures Video - letterboxed, English language, Dutch subtitles as **A Taste For Fear**.

Italy: Mondadori Video - 86m 47s, full screen, poor duplication as **Pathos (un sapore di paura)**.

USA: Imperial - as **Obsession - A Taste For Fear**.

TENEBRAE

Tenebre ('Darkness')

Tenebrae: Terror Uden Graesner (Denmark video sleeve title)

Tenebres (France)

Duisternis (Holland: video sleeve title, 'Darkness')

Shadow (Japan)

Tinieblas (Spain)

Tenebrae - Terror Utan Grns (Sweden)

Unsane (USA)

Sotto gli occhi dell'assassino (Italy: pre-production title 'Under the Eyes of the Killer')

1982 Italy Eastmancolor Technicolor

Technovision 101 mins

Production Company: Sigma Cinematografica (Rome)

Director: Dario Argento

Producer: Claudio Argento

Story: Dario Argento, George Kemp

Screenplay: Dario Argento

Cinematography: Luciano Tovoli

SEX, DRUGS, ROCK & ROLL EN... MOORD

A TASTE FOR FEAR

a TITANUS production in association with RETEITALIA
 VIRGINIA HEY GERARD DARMON GIOIA SCOLA CARLO MUCARI
 DARIO PARISINI CARIN MC DONALD TEAGAN CLIVE
 with EVA GRIMALDI and KID CREOLE directed by PICCIO RAFFANINI
 director of photography ROMANO ALBANI (a.i.c.)
 art director PAOLO BIAGETTI music by GABRIELE DUCROS
 executive producer JACQUES LIPKAU GOYARD

RCA Columbia Pictures VIDEO

Editor: Franco Fraticelli
 Art Director: Giuseppe Bassan
 Music: Claudio Simonetti, Pignatelli, Morante
 Special Effects: Giovanni Corridoro
 First Assistant Director: Lamberto Bava
 Second Assistant Director: Michele Soavi
 Cast: Anthony Franciosa (*Peter Neal*), Daria Nicolodi (*Anne*), John Saxon (*Bulmer, Peter Neal's agent*), Giuliano Gemma (*Captain Germani*), Christian [Cristiano] Borromeo (*Gianni*), Mirella D'Angelo (*Tilde*), Carola Stagnaro (*Inspector Altieri*), Veronica Lario (*Jane Miccaro*), John Steiner (*Christiano Berti*), Lara Wendel (*Maria Albaretto*), Ania Pieroni (*Elsa Manni*), Eva Robins/Roberto Coatti (*young woman in flashbacks*), Mirella Banti (*Marion*), Enio Girolami (*store detective*), Fulvio Mingozzi, Isabella Amedeo, Marino Mase', Monica Maisani, Giampaolo Saccarola (*pathologist*), Ippolita Santarelli, Francesca Viscardi.

An attractive shop-lifter is killed by a razor-wielding maniac who forces pages from a best-selling novel, *Tenebrae*, into her mouth. The author, Peter Neal, arrives in Rome to help publicise his book and receives a threatening note from the killer. Soon, a lesbian journalist and her lover are slashed to death. A young woman finds cuttings and photos of the murdered women and is axed. Neal and Gianni, his young gofer, pay a visit to Christiano Berti's house - the author had recently appeared on Berti's television chat-show and suspects he may know something. Gianni witnesses Berti being axed in the head. Back outside, Gianni finds that Peter had been knocked unconscious by a blow to the head. Bulmer, Neal's agent, arranges to meet someone in a shopping precinct, and following a short wait, is approached by a figure whom he clearly knows. The unseen person stabs him in the stomach. Neal prepares to leave Rome. Gianni is convinced that he has missed something obvious and returns to Berti's house... At the time of its release, some critics and fans felt that after the supernatural horror of *Suspiria* and *Inferno*, the director had taken an unnecessary thematic step back with this return to his *giallo* roots. This view pre-supposes that witchcraft is somehow a more elevated subject matter than murder, which is clearly nonsense. But in its presentation, *Tenebrae* is perhaps a step backwards. The director's lurid approach to his subject matter makes it appear like he was adapting a comic book or more specifically a *fumetti*. Certain characters, such as Jane (an obvious red herring who creeps about in dark sunglasses) and the provocative lesbians are far too stereotypical to be taken seriously (compare these sexed-up sapphic ciphers to the more realistic lesbian characters in *Trauma*). In this sense, *Tenebrae* seems a world away from the director's previous *giallo*, the more serious, art-influenced *Deep Red*. However, this somewhat sensationalised storytelling isn't necessarily a bad thing and makes *Tenebrae* one of the director's most entertaining films. And one aspect of the film is undeniably forward-looking. It's set in an ultra-modern Rome, where famous antiquities are notably absent and everything seems white, clean and brightly-lit. The director has even suggested that the film isn't based in the present, but several years into the future. This strange notion isn't really reflected on the screen (but perhaps provided the inspiration for *A Taste For Fear* which is most definitely futuristic). The film's curious title (which means 'darkness' in Italian) has also caused some debate. Argento has claimed he intended it to refer to the darkness in the human soul but as there is no reference to this in the finished product, it seems fair to assume that it was most probably just a title he liked. This skilfully made film out-does all of the auteur's previous thrillers in trying to hide the identity of the murderer. So the viewer is deliberately misled and, even after the film's final revelations, is left recounting the facts they have been presented. Aside from its clever plotting, *Tenebrae* revels in glossy images of death (the pics which the murder takes of the victims could have come from an advert) while violence is even more heavily fetishised. It's an

Something is out there...

coming CLOSER... CLOSER... CLOSE

Don't be afraid to be afraid-



THEY'RE
 COMING
 TO GET
 YOU!

Starring GEORGE HARRISON
 EDWIGE FENECH • SUSAN SARGENT

TECHNICOLOR + CINECOLOR

Directed by SERGIO MARTINO

an INDEPENDENT-INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTION

undeniably seductive package in which every frame seems to have been considered in detail. Only the much-discussed crane shot over the roof of a building seems unnecessarily contrived. Argento's assured direction is superbly complimented by a crystalline cinematography, above average performances (except for Veronica Lario as Jane who skulks about like she's in a silent movie), and a pounding rock score. Like *Deep Red*, this is a near perfect example of the *giallo*.

Video:

Australia: Palace Explosive - 96m 49s, pan and scan, good quality transfer.
 Bahrain (?): label illegible - 96m 27s, letterboxed, English language, Arabic subtitles as *Tenebrae*.
 Belgium: Belga Films - 96m 44s, letterboxed except for a brief full screen scene which shows Neal cycling to Kennedy airport, French/Dutch subtitles.
 Denmark: Warner/Metronome - cut: the arm chopping scene is shorter, full screen with sleeve title *Tenebrae - Terror uden Graenser*.
 France: SVP; Planete Video/Film Office; Rene Chateau - 95m 12s (no end credits). All as *Tenebres*.
 Germany: VPS - cut.

Greece: Home Video Hellas - 96m 00s
 Videasonic - both uncut, letterboxed
 Holland: Thorn/EMI - as *Tenebrae*.
 Italy: Creazioni; Mondadori - 96m 44s
 Video - all uncut, letterboxed as *Tenebrae*
 Sweden: Sonet - heavily cut, letterboxed with sleeve title *Tenebrae - Terror Utan Graenser*
 UK: Videomedia - 96m 48s (the arm chopping scene is cut by 4 seconds) with a BBFC rating, letterboxed at 1.60:1 as *Tenebrae*
 USA: Fox Hills - 91m: cut as *Unsane*.
 end credits music (a Kim Wilde track)

Laserdisc:

Japan: Columbia - 101m 53s, letterboxed as *Tenebre*.
 USA: Roan Group - 100m 32s, some footage missing due to frame jumps, with commentary by Dario Argento and Claudio Simonetti as *Tenebrae*. Remixed into Chace Digital Stereo. Includes a letterboxed trailer.

DVD:

Japan: Culture Publications - Italian language Japanese subtitles as *Tenebre*.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Cinevox CD and re-issue with extra tracks
 UK: label unknown - LP.

TERROR AT THE OPERA**Opera****Terreur a l'opera** (France)

1987 Italy Technicolor Panavision Dolby stereo 105m

Production Company: Cecchi-Gori Group/Tiger Cinematografica/A.D.C. Production in collaboration with R.A.I. Radio Televisione Italiana

Director: Dario Argento

Producer: Dario Argento

Story: based on an original idea by Dario Argento

Screenplay: Dario Argento, Franco Ferrini

Cinematography: Ronnie Taylor

Editor: Franco Fraticelli

Production Designer: Davide Bassan

Art Director: Gianmaurizio Fercioni (Regio Theatre, Parma)

Music: Brian Eno, Roger Eno; Claudio

Simonetti; Bill Wyman, Terry Taylor; The Group Steel Grave; The Northern Light; Giuseppe Verdi

Special Effects: Renato Agostini, Sergio Stivaletti, Barbara Morosetti

First Assistant Director: Paulo Zenatello, Antonio Gabriella

Second Unit Director: Michele Soavi

Cast: Cristina Marsillach (*Betty*), Ian Charleson (*Marco*), Urbano Barberini (*Inspector Alan Santini*), Daria Nicolodi (*Mira*), Coralina Cataldi Tassoni (*Julia*), Antonella Vitale (*Marion*), William McNamara (*Urbano*), Barbara Cupisti (*Albertini*), Antonio Juorio, Carola Stagnaro, Francesca Cassola (*Alma*), Maurizio Carbone, Cristina Glachino, Gyorivani Gyorgy, Bjorn Hammer, Peter Pitsch, Sebastiano Somma.

Betty, a young opera singer, inherits the lead role in a modernist adaptation of Giuseppe Verdi's *Macbeth* when the diva breaks her leg after a fight with the dictatorial director, Marco. The latter, normally a director of horror movies, is a sadist with designs on Betty. The young woman is a success in her role, but she has a dangerous admirer. The psychopath kidnaps and forces her to watch him kill Stefan, her boyfriend; Julia, the wardrobe mistress; and Mira, her agent. Marco is convinced that the killer will attend the next performance and hatches a plan in which the ravens used in the opera will seek out and identify the culprit... From its wonderful opening shot of a theatre interior reflected in the eye of a squawking raven, **Terror at the Opera** is an exceptional visual experience. Generally regarded as a return to form after the poorly received **Phenomena**, this film is packed with the virtuoso camerawork and graphic violence expected of Argento, and the image of the heroine's terrified face, her eyes literally pinned open as she witnesses the violent death of her lover, has now become a horror icon. Other images to relish are the infamous bullet-through-the-keyhole sequence and the crane shots from a raven's point-of-view. For most of its running time, **Terror at the Opera** is close to being a classic like **Tenebrae**. Unfortunately, it fails to fully satisfy due to an uncharacteristically weak ending. The infantile heavy metal songs the director unwisely began to incorporate into his films during the mid-Eighties also seem even more out of place in the classical setting.

Video:Australia: First Release - 91m 55s: dialogue scenes cut by 11m 20s, as **Terror at the Opera**.France: GCR - as **Terreur a l'opera**.Italy: ViVivideo - cut, full screen as **Opera**.Japan: RCA/Columbia - full screen as **Terror at the Opera**.UK: Virgin Vision - 91m 05s: cut by 47 seconds with a BBFC '18' as per UK theatrical version as **Terror at the Opera**.USA: Southgate Video - unrated and 'R' rated versions, Hi-Fi stereo as **Terror at the Opera**.**Laserdisc:**Japan: RCA/Columbia - full screen as **Terror at the Opera**.**THEY'RE COMING TO GET YOU****Tutti i colori del buio** ('All the Colours of Darkness')**Todos los colores de la oscuridad** (Spain 'All the Colours of Darkness')**Toutes les couleurs du vice** (Belgium, France 'All the Colours of Vice')**De bonte ontucht** (Belgium: alternate title)**L'alliance invisible** (France 'The Invisible Alliance')**Demons of the Dead** (USA: alternate title)**Day of the Maniac** (USA: alternate title)
1972 Italy/Spain Technochrome Eastmancolor 99m

Production Company: Lea Film/National Cinematografica (Rome)/Compagnia C. Astro (Madrid)

Director: Sergio Martino

Producers: Mino Loy, Luciano Martino

Story: Santiago Moncada

Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi, Sauro Scavolini

Cinematography: Giancarlo Ferrando, Miguel F. Mila

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Directors: Jaime Perez Cubero, José Luis Galicia

Music and Music Director: Bruno Nicolai

Cast: Edwige Fenech (*Jane*), George Hilton (*Richard*), Julian Ugarte (*McBain, leader of Satanic cult*), Ivan Rassimov (*Mark Cogan*),George [Jorge] Rigaud (*Doctor Burton*), Maria Cumani Quasimodo (*new tenant*), Susan Scott [Nieves Navarro] (*Barbara*), Marina Malfatti (*Mary*), Dominique Boschero (*Jane's mother*), Alan Collins [Luciano Pigozzi] (*Franciscus Clay, a lawyer*), Renato Chiantoni (*Mr. May*), Tom Felleghi (*police inspector*), Lisa Leonardi, Vera Drudi, Carla Mancini, Gianni Pulone.

London: Jane, an attractive young woman, suffers from terrible nightmares which seem to relate to a traumatic experience she had as a child. Jane's husband Richard advises her to consult Doctor Burton, the psychiatrist who employs her sister. Mary, a new neighbour, invites Jane to a meeting of Devil worshippers and she is drawn into their orgies. It transpires that her mother was a member of the coven and Mark Cogan, a man who has been terrorising her is also a Satanist. The psychiatrist takes Jane away to the countryside to stay in seclusion with an elderly couple. When Jane wakes next morning, she discovers the couple sitting at their breakfast table, both dead...

This *giallo*/horror film incorporates elements of **Rosemary's Baby**, allowing Martino to give full reign to his penchant for nightmarish imagery. The resulting scope compositions look stunning (a scene where Jane is chased through woods by dogs is particularly impressive) and the director uses a fish-eye lens to make the Satanic orgy sequences effectively

kinky and hallucinatory, even though the overall effect is slightly compromised by Nicolai's inappropriate use of a sitar on the soundtrack.

They're Coming... also benefits from a bevy of gorgeous European actresses with Fenech once again the star of the show. It's typical of Italian film-makers to subject actresses to a catalogue of sexual and physical abuse, making it unclear whether the indignities are meant to instill pity or provide the audience with sadistic pleasure. Perhaps both? And in yet another nod to Freud, a clear link is drawn between Jane's childhood experience and her sexual frigidity. Finally, full use is made of the English locations as a backdrop to the terror (you can almost believe that there are devilish goings-on at the apartment block where Fenech's character lives) whilst a stalking sequence on the London underground provided the inspiration for a similar scene in De Palma's **Dressed To Kill**.

Video:

Italy: General Video, Videogram. Both as **Tutti i colori del buio**.

USA: Super Video - as **Day of the Maniac**; Independent International - cut, ends with Edwige Fenech's dream sequence, full screen as **Day of the Maniac**; Vogue - cut (ends with Edwige Fenech's dream sequence) as **They're Coming To Get You**.

TOO BEAUTIFUL TO DIE

Sotto il vestito niente II ('Nothing Under the Dress 2')

1988 Italy colour

Director: Dario Piana

Producer: Achille Manzotti

Story: Achille Manzotti, Dario Piana

Screenplay: Dario Piana, Claudio Mancini, Achille Manzotti

Music: Robert Cacciapaglia

Cast: Francois Eric Gendkon (*David*), Florence Guerin (*Melanie*), Giovanni Tamberi, Gioia Maria Scola, Helena Jesus, Northana Ariffin, Randi Ingermann, Carlo Mucari, Dario Parisini.

A group of models attend a party at a rich man's villa and, fuelled by drugs, an orgy develops. Sylvia, one of the models, is raped by the old pervert and leaves the party distraught. Later that night she is killed in a car crash, having apparently been shot. David, a video director, was nurturing Sylvia's career but soon finds a new disco diva in Melanie. The three other women at the party/orgy all die in suspicious circumstances as does their pimping manager Alex. Meanwhile, Melanie is revealed to be Sylvia's sister...

This sequel-in-name-only bears no relation to **Nothing Underneath**, except for the fashion model theme. Too slick and glossy for its own good, the film has the feel of an over-extended rock video. Nevertheless, the climax, in which the heroine is stalked by the killer in a large film studio, is reasonably engaging. Florence Guerin became a regular feature in a number of softcore flicks and erotic thrillers but she is no substitute for the Seventies starlets who enlivened so many Euro productions.

Video:

Dutch: Arrow - 95m 23s as **Too Beautiful To Die**.

Germany: New Vision.

Italy: label unknown - as **Sotto il vestito niente II**.

Japan: label unknown - letterboxed as **Too Beautiful To Die**.

UK: Colourbox - cut by 1m 49s with a BBFC '18 certificate as **Too Beautiful To Die**.

TOO YOUNG TO DIE

Morte sospetta di una minorenne

('Suspicious Death of a Minor')

Milano: morte sospetta di una minorenne (Italy: alternate title)

1975 Italy Eastmancolor Cinescope 100m

Production Company: Dania Film

Director: Sergio Martino

Producer: Luciano Martino

Story: Ernesto Gastaldi

Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi, Sergio Martino

Cinematography: Giancarlo Ferrando

Editor: Raimondo Cruciani

Art Director and Costumes: Elio Micheli

Music: Luciano Michelini

Assistant Director: Tiziana De Nora

Cast: Claudio Cassinelli (*Inspector Paolo Germa*), Mel Ferrer (*Police Commissioner*), Lia Tanzi (*Carmela*), Gianfranco Barra (*Teti*), Patrizia Castaldi, Adolfo [Pino] Caruso (*Giannino*), Jenny Tamburi [Luciana Della Robia] (*Gloria*), Massimo Girotti (*Gaudenzio Pesce*), Aldo Massaro (*Listri*), Pino Caruso (*Giannino*), Fiammetta Baralla (*hotel owner*), Franco Alpestre (*Menga*), Gino Pernice, Carlo Alighiero, Barbara Magnolfi, Roberto Posse, Carlotta Witting.

In a squalid Milan hotel, a young woman is slashed to death by a professional killer. More killings follow. An ambiguous individual who is seemingly present whenever a murder takes place is revealed to be Inspector Paolo Germa, who is undercover investigating a child prostitution ring. His enquiries, which are hampered by a ruthless hired killer intent on eliminating all possible witnesses, eventually lead to a prominent financier who seems beyond the reach of the law...

Too Young To Die is an odd combination: part police thriller, part *giallo*, and part comedy. Its cynical central theme - teenage girls being sexually exploited by rich, influential men - was a background motif for several *gialli*. But rather than merely providing the basis for a number of sleaze scenes (some brief nudity) and violent deaths (two of which are gratifyingly nasty), the exploitative elements are intertwined with the unorthodox enquiries being undertaken by Cassinelli's violent cop figure (he threatens suspects at gunpoint and enlists a petty criminal as an accomplice). Had the film remained a cop/*giallo* thriller hybrid it might have found an audience but because Gastaldi's script audaciously attempts to incorporate humour it fails to satisfy fans of any individual genre. The comedy works well during a high-speed car chase but seems out of place elsewhere. Thankfully, it's dispensed with in later scenes which include a gun battle on a rollercoaster, the penultimate rooftop encounter between the committed cop and the ruthless killer and the downbeat corruption-fuelled conclusion. When providing lightweight accompaniment to the comic episodes, Michelini's score imitates Gaslini's **Deep Red** opus.

Video:

Italy: Mondadori - 95m 29s, full screen except for opening credits - as **Morte sospetta di una minorenne**.

TORSO

I corpi presentano tracce di violenza carnale

('The Corpses Show Evidence of Rape')

Die Sage des Teufels (Germany 'The Devil's Saw-Blade')

Carnal Violence - Torso (English language title)

1973 Italy Technicolor scope 93m

Production Company: Compagnia Cinematografica Champion

Director and Story: Sergio Martino

Producer: Carlo Ponti

Screenplay: Ernesto Gastaldi, Sergio Martino

Cinematography: Giancarlo Ferrando

Editor: Eugenio Alabiso

Art Director: Giantito Burchiellaro

Music: Guido and Maurizio De Angelis

Assistant Director: Michele Massimo Tarantini

Cast: Suzy Kendall (*Jane*), Tina Aumont

(*Daniela*), Luc Merenda (*Doctor Roberto*), John Richardson (*Professor Franz*), Roberto Bisacco

(*Stefano*), Carla Brait (*Ursula*), Ernesto Colli

(*Johnny Tomasso, a street trader*), Angela

Covello (*Katia*), Cristina [Conchita] Airolti

(*Carol*), Patrizia Adiutori (*Florence*), Luciano

Bartoli, Gianni Greco, Luciano De Ambrosis,

Enrico Di Marco, Giorgio Dolfi.

Two college girls, Florence and Carol, are murdered by a hacksaw-wielding maniac. The only



Video sleeve for the forthcoming Redemption release of 'Torso'

clue to the killer's identity is a patterned red scarf found on the body of one of the victims Daniela, an art student, is convinced she has seen the scarf before and soon receives intimidating telephone calls. Meanwhile, a street trader who sells scarves attempts to blackmail the murderer but is subsequently run down by a speeding car. Daniela, accompanied by her friends Ursula, Katia and Jane, takes refuge in a secluded country villa in the mountains. Unfortunately, the killer follows them. A local voyeur spies on the young women, but he is later thrown down a well. That evening, the body of one of their college friends is delivered to the door. Next morning, Jane discovers that her friends have been murdered and that the killer is hacking their bodies into pieces...

Slick production values, stylish direction, picturesque provincial locations and a great score by Guido and Maurizio De Angelis add up to another superior *giallo* thriller from Sergio Martino. **Torso** is only marred by an unsavoury element of leering Italian machismo and the somewhat protracted finale'. The American release proved to be extremely popular on the drive-in circuit and along with Bava's **A Bay of Blood** probably had a significant part to play in the development of the stalk 'n' slash genre. American distributor Joseph Brenner excised the nastiest gore scenes, placed the wood sawing sequence behind the titles and added a jarring guitar theme by Bruno Nicolai at the start (it was also used in Doris Wishman's **Deadly Weapons** and Leon Klimovsky's **Night of the Walking Dead**).

Video:

Germany: Titan Video - 79m 18s: cut (US 'R' rated version with additional cuts) as **Die Sage des Teufels**. Great sleeve artwork.

Holland: VUH - cut, letterboxed as **Torso**.

Italy: GVR - 89m 56s, letterboxed at 1.85:1, as **I corpi presentano tracce di violenza carnale**.

Sweden: Trix - letterboxed as **Torso**.

UK: Iver - 85m 13s: cut (US 'R' rated version) as **Torso**; Vipco - 84m 31s: cut by 50 seconds as **Torso**; Redemption - letterboxed, Italian language, English subtitles (forthcoming).

USA: MPI; Prism Entertainment - cut as **Torso**

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero CD - **Murder For Pleasure: Giallo and Thriller Themes** - title theme from the re-edited US version which is incorrectly attributed to Guido and Maurizio De Angelis.



美しい、足のない、乳房のない
女のボディが好きだ
美しい女子学生の柔肌に
くい込む悪魔のノコギリ!

ラスト10分の驚くべきショックシーンが
ヨーロッパ全土を絶叫で覆った!
倒錯SEXに飲びふるえる冷酷非情の殺人鬼!

獣姦新景

〈カラー作品〉

スージー・ケンドール / ティナ・オーモン / リュック・メランダ / 監督セルジオ・マルティーノ / 製作カルロ・ボンティ / 日本ヘラルド

TRAUMA

Aura (Germany)

Aura's Enigma (later pre-production title)

Moving Guillotine (original pre-production title)

1993 Italy Technicolor Kodak Eastmancolor
Technovision Dolby stereo 106m

Production Company: ADC S.r.l.

Director: Dario Argento

Producer: Dario Argento

Story: Franco Ferrini, Giovanni Romoli, Dario Argento,

Screenplay: Dario Argento, T.E.D. Klein

Cinematography: Raffaele Mertes

Editor: Bennett Goldberg

Art Director: Nance Derby, Jack D.L. Ballance

Music: Pino Donaggio

Cast: Asia Argento (*Aura Petrescu*), Frederic Forrest (*Doctor Judd*), Brad Dourif (*Doctor Lloyd*), Christopher Rydell (*David Parsons*), Piper Laurie (*Adriana Petrescu*, *Aura's mother*), Laura Johnson (*Grace*), James Russo (*Captain Travis*), Dominique Serrano (*Stefan Petrescu*), Hope Alexander-Willis (*Linda*), Ira Belgrade (*Arnie*), Sharon Barr (*Hilda Volkman*), Cory Garven (*Gabriel Pickering*), Terry Perkins (*Mrs Pickering*), Tony Saffold (*Ben Aldrich*), Peter Moore (*Mark*), Lester Parry (*Sergeant Carver*), David Chase (*Sid Marigold*), Jacqui Kim (*Alice*), Rita Vassallo (*Rita*), Stephen D'Ambrose (*pale man*), Bonita Parsons (*prime woman*), Gregory Beech (*deaf man*).

A female chiropractor stays open late for a new customer who turns out to be a black-gloved killer. Her assailant uses a gruesome electronic noose which decapitates victims. An anorexic young woman, Aura, is attempting suicide but is persuaded otherwise by David Parsons, a young artist. She has escaped from the Faraday Clinic, a psychiatric institute, and is returned to her parents, professional mediums Adriana and Stefan Petrescu. That evening, various eccentrics gather together for a seance conducted by Adriana. A voice, apparently from one of the dead victims, informs the attendees that the killer is among them. Adriana runs into the rainstorm outside, followed by her husband and daughter. Aura catches a glimpse of the killer holding up her parents' heads. The media dub the killer 'The Headhunter' and the decapitations continue...

Although generally regarded as a misconceived 'sell-out' aimed at the American marketplace, **Trauma** is actually a perfectly reasonable attempt to transpose *giallo* elements to a different environment. And despite some undeniable flaws (Donaggio's playful yet occasionally pompous score; Tom Savini's unconvincing

Italian video sleeve for 'Trauma'



severed heads), a couple of viewings reveal that it has considerably more depth than its detractors have allowed. Although Minneapolis hardly excites as a location, Argento deliberately creates a shadowy environment (the film's dark look is diametrically opposed to most of his previous work, especially *Tenebrae*). In fact, the dimly-lit interiors and rain-soaked murder scenes anticipate the over-praised *Seven*. By dismissing **Trauma**, perhaps Argento's (mainly teenage) fans were revealing that all they really want are well-orchestrated gore set-pieces, something which this film patently avoids. Indeed, this is a more mature work which eschews bloody excess in favour of suspense, places greater emphasis on characterisation and even introduces a romantic element. But that's not to say that this is a film which might just appeal to a mainstream audience. In spite of the American setting, this is still pure Argento and the central mystery - what did Aura really see? - is a theme going back to *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage* and *Deep Red*. Moreover, details such as decapitated heads which utter dying words, the motorised device for beheading victims, a heroine who is anorexic and suicidal, a 'hero' who regresses back to drug addiction and a child who reacts to being attacked by coolly turning the murder weapon on his oppressor, are unlikely to appeal to an audience expecting to be entertained by the usual safe horror themes. Doctor Judd's use of psychotropic tropical berries, the scene where David tries to obtain heroin with a fake prescription, and the fact that both the male

and female protagonists are ex-junkies also add touches of unacceptability worthy of William Burroughs. Christopher Rydell is well cast as the male lead and Asia is surprisingly effective as the misfit whose mind has been warped by seeing her crazy mother having sex with the slimy Doctor Judd (more Freudian theory!). Piper Laurie does little more than reprise her domineering mother role from *Carrie* but at least her screentime is limited. Finally, the sequences in which a young boy spies on the killer are blackly humorous and serve to balance out some of the more hysterical sections

Video:

Holland: CNR - as **Trauma**.

UK: High Fliers - 101m 53s: cut by six seconds with a BBFC '18' certificate, pan and scan as **Trauma**.

USA: Worldvision Home Video - 106m 03s, pan and scan except for end credits which are letterboxed, mono, as **Trauma**.

Laserdisc:

USA: Worldvision - as **Trauma**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Cinevox CD - *Trauma: The Orchestral Score*.

TRHAUMA

Trauma (alternate title)

Demence (Belgium, Canada, France)

1979 Italy Kodak Eastmancolor Stacofilm 74m

Production Company: Joint Working Group

Director: Gianni [Antonio] Martucci

Producer: Alberto Marras

Story and Screenplay: Gianni Martucci, Alessandro Capone, Ronny Russo [Gaetano Russo]

Cinematography: Angelo Bevilacqua

Music: Ubaldo Continiello

Cast: Ronny Russ [Gaetano Russo] (*Andrea*), Dafne Price [Domitilla Cavazza] (*Lilly*), Roberto Posse (*Carlo*), Timothy Wood (*Paul*), Franco Diogene (*Bitto*), Per Holgher (*the being*), Silvia Mauri (*Silvia*), Anna Maria Chiatante (*Olga*), Gina Mancinelli (*Helen*).

A group of people are spending the weekend at Carlo's country-home. The guests include Paul, a photographer and Olga, his model. A strange individual with an eye disfigurement soon murders Olga with a machete and has sex with her corpse. The killer then stalks and decimates the rest of the guests until only Lilly is left. However, it appears that the maniac was just a pawn in someone else's hands...

The tacky opening credits sequence, which unfolds to a cheap disco-funk track, sets the tone for this crass 'maniac in the house' film with an additional emphasis on mild sleaze. The mystery element involves the identity of a character who is rewarding the simple-minded maniac by giving him pieces of Lego(I). Red herrings include a camp blackmailer. The film builds quickly (like the Lego) to a truly protracted stalking sequence, which forms the supposedly suspenseful climax, but will leave most viewers looking at their watches or hitting the fast-forward button. Meanwhile, Ubaldo Continello's plodding score from Deodato's *Last Cannibal World* and his perky ditty for *Play Motel* are re-hashed. Tubby actor Franco Diogene has appeared in other exploitation fare such as *Strip Nude For Your Killer*, *The Sweet House of Horrors* and *The Stendhal Syndrome*. Many reference sources and reviews refer to this film as 'Thrauma' but the title on the film print and Italian cinema poster is clearly **Trhauma**.

Video:

Belgium/France: Select/Mercury International Productions - 71m 31s, letterboxed as

Demence.

Canada: Los Plaisirs Video - 71m 20s as

Demence.

Italy: Cinehollywood - 71m 32s, full screen as

Trhauma with sleeve title **Trauma**.**TROPIC OF CANCER***Al tropico del Cancro**Peacocks's Place* (Italy: subtitle)*Death in Haity* (Eire: sic - video re-title!)*Tropique du cancer* (France)

1972 Italy Telecolor Eastmancolor Cinescope 95m

Production Company: 14 Luglio

Cinematografica (Rome)

Director: Edward G. Muller [Edoardo Mulargia],

Gian Paolo Lomi

Producers: Pino De Martino, Andrea Di

Sangiuliano

Story: Edoardo Mulargia, Antonio De Tefte

Screenplay: Giampaolo Lomi, Edoardo

Mulargia, Antonio De Tefte

Cinematographer: Marcello Masciocchi

Editor: Cesare Bianchini

Music: Piero Umiliani

Cast: Anthony Steffen [Antonio De Tefte]

(*Doctor Williams*), Anita Strindberg (*Grace**Wright*), Gabriele Tinti (*Fred Wright*), UmbertoRaho (*Mr. Philip, hotel proprietor*), AlfioNicolosi (*Mr. Peacock*), Stelio Candelli (*Mr.**Garner*), Gordon Felio, Kathie Witt (*Robin*),

Richard Osborne, Bob Lemoine, Pierre Richard

Merceron, Fred Adé.

Death in Haiti

Anthony Steffen - Anita Strindberg



Irish video sleeve for 'Tropic of Cancer'

Fred and Grace Wright are vacationing in Haiti when they meet Fred's old friend Doctor Williams. It emerges that Williams, who now practices medicine at a local level, previously discovered a revolutionary drug formula. A spate of 'accidents' befall the holiday-makers and Williams' former assistants turn up dead, having been drained of blood. It becomes clear that several avaricious individuals, including Peacock, an obese local businessman, are trying to get their hands on the formula. However, Peacock is also killed and suspicion falls upon Fred, who is also revealed to be interested in the chemical formula. Meanwhile, Grace is beginning to experience vivid, voodoo-inspired, nightmares.

Nothing to do with Henry Miller's infamous novel of the same title, this exotic thriller is an attempt to combine the *giallo* and horror genres (Williams lives in a run-down "haunted" house which is like "something out of Charles Addams"), plus a touch of mondo thrown in for good measure (the film asserts that 'documentary sequences were filmed from life and are completely authentic'). Consequently, there is an orgiastic voodoo rite, in which the participants are clearly in a state of delirium, a cock fight, and a spectacular marriage ceremony which provides the backdrop for the revelatory

finale. The film is suffused with stereotypical racist notions, playing upon some white peoples' fear of a black crowd, and of black sexuality (Strindberg, who is an ineffectual heroine, has nightmares in which she appears naked surrounded by virile young black men).

Umiliani's bombastic main themes are suitably *giallo*-esque but the stalking sequences are unfortunately accompanied by the kind of synthesiser whine found in low budget American horrors. Notwithstanding its predictably racist subtext, the film (accidentally) captures the atmosphere of Haiti, while the numerous deaths - the demise of Stelio Candelli's character is particularly nasty - and the riotous climax are reasonably effective. Interestingly, this relatively obscure affair is more effective than mainstream films with similar themes, such as Alan Parker's *Angel Heart*, a rather dull attempt to combine *Film Noir* with black magic.

Video:Eire: EKO - 90m 37s, slightly letterboxed, poor sound, superimposed on-screen title as **Death in Haity!**France: Lange Video; Scherzo. Both as **Tropique du cancer**.Greece: WP - full screen, as **Tropic of Cancer**
Italy: Golden Video - **Al tropico del Cancro**.

IL TUO DOLCE CORPO DA UCCIDERE

('Your Sweet Body for Killing')

Una maleta para un cadaver (Spain 'A Suitcase For a Corpse')

Un joli corps qu'il faut tuer (France 'An Attractive Body Has To Be Killed')

Muertes (France: video re-title 'Murders')

1970 Italy/Spain/Morocco Telecolor

Eastmancolor scope 88m

Production Company: Luis Film

(Rome)/Copercines (Madrid)/Cinecité Marocaine (Tangier)

Director: Alfonso Brescia

Producer: Luigi Mondello

Story and Screenplay: Antonio Fos

Cinematography: Emilio Foriscot

Editor: Mario Salvatore

Art Director: Jaime Perez Cubero

Music and Music Director: Carlo Savina

Assistant Director: Giuliana Gherardi

Cast: Giorgio Ardisson (*Clive Ardington*),

Francoise Prevost (*Diana*), Eduardo Fajardo

(*Doctor Franz Adler*), Orchidea De Santis

(*Eleonora Sanders*), Luisa Sala, Felix Defauce,

Miguel De Castillo, Larbi Yacoubi, Hamadi

Tounsi.

Clive Ardington, a diplomat, is henpecked by his bossy wife Diana so he fantasises about killing her in various ways. He discovers that she is having an affair with his friend, Doctor Franz Adler, but remains unfazed. However, when she disposes of his beloved tropical fish he snaps. Threatening to reveal Adler's Nazi past, Clive blackmails the doctor into chopping up his wife and disposing of her body in two suitcases as 'diplomatic baggage'. Clive then takes the cases to Tangier in order to dispose of them. Unfortunately, one of the suitcases is accidentally switched with an attractive young woman's baggage. While Clive desperately searches for the missing case he becomes aware that he is being followed by the local police and that someone is out to blackmail him...

The first half of this *giallo*/black comedy is amiable enough, but once the action relocates to Tangier Antonio Fos's plot begins to drag. Giorgio Ardisson's increasingly frantic search for the missing case becomes tiresome rather than tense and when the twist ending eventually arrives it is too late for the audience to care. This is a shame because Alfonso Brescia, who is notorious for making listless films, directs with more verve than usual. Uninspiring com-

poser Carlo Savina contributes a surprisingly effective score with the female vocals and jazzy interludes which feature in so many *gialli* soundtracks. Lead man Giorgio Ardisson, who seems slightly uncomfortable in this satire, was impressive as the ambiguous hero in Mino Guerrini's *Date For a Murder*.

Video:

France MPM - 84m 39s, letterboxed as **Un joli corps qu'il faut tuer**. The dream sequences are tinted green and the opening credits play against a psychedelic montage of images from the film; MPM - re-released as **Meurtres**.

Italy: Magnum 3B - 88m 59s, full screen, slightly washed out colours. Credits play against a plain black screen; AVO Film. Both as **Il tuo dolce corpo da uccidere**.

THE TWO FACES OF FEAR

I due volti della paura ('The Two Faces of Fear')

Coartada en disco rojo (Spain: 'Alibi in Red Light')

Les 2 visages de la peur (France: 'The 2 Faces of Fear')

Diabolical Killer (?)

Alibi nella luce rossa (shooting title: 'Alibi Under a Red Light')

1972 Spain/Italy Eastmancolor Technochrome Techniscope 88m

Production Company: Tecisa Film

(Madrid)/B.R.C. Produzioni (Rome)

Director: Tulio Demichelli

Story: Pedro Mario Herrero

Screenplay: Pedro Mario Herrero, Mario Di Nardo

Cinematography: Manuel Rojas

Editor: Angel Serrano

Art Directors: Gastone Carsetti, Francisco Canet

Music: Franco Micalizzi

Assistant Director: Felix Fernandez

Cast: George Hilton (*Roberto Carli*), Fernando

Rey (*Inspector Nardi*), Luciana Paluzzi (*Elena*

Carli), Eduardo Fajardo, Manuel Zarzo, Luis

Davila, Antonio Del Real, Carla Mancini, Teresa

Guayda Gonzalez, Dinorah Ayala, Emilio

Portela, Anita Strindberg (*Doctor Paola*

Lombardo).

Doctor Miguel Azzini is found shot dead. The police suspect his colleagues: Elena Carli, his former mistress and owner of the clinic where he worked; Roberto Carli, her surgeon husband Doctor Paula Lombardo, Roberto's mistress; and the clinic's administrator. Inspector Nardi discovers that Elena has a heart condition and had offered Miguel an increased sharehold in the clinic in order to dissuade him from leaving for another post. Elena's heart condition is worsened by the relentless police scrutiny and by her suspicion that Roberto is the murderer. She has to be rushed into hospital and is ever more alarmed when Roberto prepares to operate...

A good cast is wasted in this muted giallo. Aside from the first murder and a chase up a spiral staircase, the rest of the film is shot without flair by Spanish director Tulio Demichelli. Some mondo-style shots of genuine open heart surgery are included for shock value but their impact is weakened by over-use. Only a couple of frantic car journeys through heavy traffic - intended to disprove the killer's alibi - have any real entertainment value. Effective editing by Angel Serrano, and Franco Micalizzi's *giallo*-typical score are the best aspects of this production. Micalizzi also contributed music for **Shadow of Death** and **Too Young To Die**.

Video:

France: Jacques Letienne Video, Carrere. Both as **Les 2 visages de la peur**.

Greece: International Video Club.

Italy: Videogram; Easy Video - 85m 05s, letterboxed as **I due volti della paura**.

THE VICTIM

Macchie solari ('Sun Spots')

Frissons d'horreur (France 'Shudder')

The Victim (English language title)

La victime (France: alternate title)

!Tension! (Spain)



Autopsy (USA)

1974 Italy Eastmancolor colore LV (Luciano Vittori) scope 100m
 Production Company: Clodio Cinematografica
 Director: Armando Crispino
 Producer: Leonardo Pescarolo
 Story and Screenplay: Armando Crispino, Lucio Battistrada
 Cinematography: Carlo Carlini
 Editor: Daniele Alabiso
 Art Director: Elio Balletti
 Music and Music Director: Ennio Morricone
 Assistant Director: Lorenzo Magnolia
 Cast: Mimsy Farmer (*Doctor Simona Sanna*), Barry Primus (*Father Paul Lennox*), Ray Lovelock (*Edgar Fiorini*), Angela Goodwin (*Danielle*), Massimo Serato (*Gianni Sanna*, *Simona's father*), Carlo Cattaneo (*Doctor Lello Sanna*), Gaby Wagner (*Betty Lennox*), Ernesto Colli (*Ivo*, *the morgue assistant*), Leonardo Severini (*building superintendent*), Eleonora Morana (*building superintendent's wife*), Antonio Casale (*Inspector Silvestri*), Gianni di Benedetto (*morgue doctor*), Maria Pia Attanasio (*Edgar's aunt*), Piero Anchisi, Pupino Samona, Sergio Sincerì, Maria De Sisti (*toy seller at Pincio*).

The citizens of Rome are enduring a heatwave and solar flares appear to be causing a series of suicides. Simona Sanna, a pathologist, is writing a thesis on real and fake suicides and, stressed by overwork, begins to hallucinate. Betty, one of Simona's neighbours, is found with a bullet in her head, having apparently taken her own life. Simona witnesses a violent confrontation between a priest named Paul, Betty's brother, and her building superintendent. When the latter also apparently commits suicide she begins to suspect the quick-tempered priest. Simona re-examines Betty's cadaver and discovers evidence that she had been forcibly drugged before her death. Becoming increasingly uneasy about her sexist boyfriend, Simona confesses that she loves Paul. The complicated trail leads to a valuable antique bible and blackmail as the motives for murder...

The Victim begins shockingly with a montage of graphic suicides: a naked young woman slashes her wrists; an elderly man puts a plastic bag over his head and leaps into a river; a man sets fire to himself in his car; surrounded by the dead bodies of his children, a man machine-guns himself into oblivion... it's a stomach-churning opener and is swiftly followed by more gruesome scenes as Farmer's overwrought character begins to imagine that the bodies in the morgue are returning to life. Unfortunately, by showing these arresting images right at the start of the film, Crispino

French video sleeve for 'The Victim'



Spanish artwork for 'The Victim'

and co-scripter Lucio Battistrada end up disappointing their audience with the complex, and typically preposterous, *giallo* narrative which then unfolds. Despite some effective suspense-filled situations - such as a deadly trap in a crime museum and the killer's attempt to do away with Simona by making it appear that she gassed herself - the remainder of **The Victim** cannot live up to the aforementioned opening scenes. Simona, Farmer's frigid protagonist, is also unlikely to engender any heart-felt audience sympathy. She puts up with an objectionable pig of a boyfriend for far too long (he nicknames her 'ice cube' for rejecting his clumsy advances and when she's nearly raped by a leering, neanderthal morgue attendant, he flipantly comments "Well, you can't blame the poor bastard for trying!"), while her inexplicable desire to replace him with a perennially angry, ex-motor racing, epileptic priest beggars belief! **The Victim** is entertaining enough but tantalisingly promises more than it finally delivers. Crispino previously contributed **The Etruscan Lives Again**.

Video:

Belgium and France: Carrere - as **Frissons d'horreur**.

Japan: Toei Video - 99m 52s, letterboxed, with genital nudity digitally censored as **The Victim**.

USA: Mogul; MPI; Prism Entertainment - 84m 47s: re-edited, full screen as **Autopsy**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gatto Nero CD - *Murder For Pleasure: Giallo and Thriller Themes* compilation - one track, not Morricone's unsettling opening theme but the dynamic music used at the start of the US **Autopsy** release (excellent in itself).

THE WASHING MACHINE

Vortice mortale ('Mortal Whirlpool')

La lavatrice (Italy: shooting title)

1993 Italy/France/Hungary Kodak Telecolor 89m

Production Company: Esse Cinematografica (Rome)/Eurogroup Film (Paris)/Focus Film (Budapest)

Director: Ruggero Deodato

Producer: Corrado and Alessandro Canzio

Story and Screenplay: Luigi Spagnol

Cinematography: Sergio D'Offizi

Editor: Gianfranco Amicucci

Art Director: Francesco Pintus, Csaba Stork
 Music: Claudio Simonetti with extracts by Mozart

Assistant Director: Alberto Mangiante

Cast: Philippe Caroit (*Inspector Alexander Stacev*), Ilaria Borrelli (*Maria 'Sissy' Kolba*), Kashia Figura (*Vida Kolba*), Barbara Ricci

Elysée Films PRESENTE

FRISSONS D'HORREUR



AVEC
**MIMSY
FARMER**
BARRY PRIMUS
RAY LOVELOCK
COULEURS

INTERDIT AUX MOINS DE 16 ANS

Musique de
Armando
CRISPINO
MUSIQUE DE
Ennio
MORRICONE

(Ludmilla Kolba), Laurence Bruffaerts (Nikolai, Stacev's assistant), Laszlo Porbely (music teacher), Claudia Pozzi (Irina, Stacev's girlfriend), Yorgo Voyagis (Yuri Petkov), Vilmos Kolba, Karoly Medriczry, Sandor Boros, Tamas Pinter, Agi David.
Uncredited Cast: Ruggero Deodato (nosy neighbour).

Three sisters - voluptuous Vida, Maria (nick-named 'Sissy'), and Ludmilla - live together in a run-down apartment building in Budapest. The sisters all vie for the attentions of Yuri Petkov, a dubious middle-aged pimp who plays them off against each other. One evening, Ludmilla claims to have found Yuri's body stuffed into their washing machine, but when Inspector Stacev arrives to investigate the body has disappeared. The good-looking young inspector attempts to discover the truth but in doing so becomes drawn into the sisters' bizarre sex games...

Although dismissed by Deodato as a rushed production which he undertook solely for the money, **The Washing Machine** is actually one of his better films, and is eminently preferable to his previous terror pic **Dial: Help**. The film's initial drawback is its misleading English language title, which makes it out to be another household appliance horror like **The Refrigerator** or, worse still, **Microwave Massacre**. But once it begins, with an aerial

shot into a dilapidated apartment building of mystery and some kinky sex play, it's obvious that the film will offer something more bold than the aforementioned movies. Although it has a definite mystery element, it transcends genre boundaries to incorporate a strong erotic content and the sexual themes on offer include female masturbation, sado-masochism, lesbianism, and exhibitionism. Slightly reminiscent of Tonino Cervi's **Queens of Evil**, there's also horror (cannibalism and suggestions of witchcraft) and a political sub-text. There are strong performances from all the leads and a great sense of atmosphere in post-Communist/newly-Capitalist Budapest. Plus, Claudio Simonetti's score is one of the best in recent years

Video:

Holland: Domestic Film Corporation - 85m 45s, letterboxed as **The Washing Machine**.

UK: Visual Film (forthcoming)

THE WEEKEND MURDERS

Concerto per pistola solista ('Concert For a Pistol Soloist')

Story of a Crime (alternate English language title)

Det Var Ikke Butleren! (Denmark: 'The Butler Didn't Do It!')

Le Week-end des assassins (France: 'The Killers Weekend')



1970 Italy Technicolor Techniscope 98m
Production Company: Juppiter Generale Cinematografica
Director: Michele Lupo
Producer: Franco Committeri, Federico Ippolito
Story and Screenplay: Fabio Pittorru, Massimo Felisatti, Sergio Donati
Additional Dialogue: Sergio Donati
Cinematography: Guglielmo Mancori
Editor: Vincenzo Tomassi
Art Director: Ugo Sterpini
Music: Francesco de Masi with extracts by Tchaikovsky
Cast: Anna Moffo (Barbara), Lance Percival (Detective Inspector Al Grey), Eveline Stewart (Ida Galli) (Isabelle), Peter Baldwin (Anthony) Giacomo Rossi-Stewart (Theodore 'Ted' Collins), Christopher Chittel (George 'Georgie Harold Gregory), Marisa Fabbri (Aunt Gladys Beryl Cunningham (Pauline Collins, Ted's wife Quinto Parmeggiani (Lawrence Brian Carter), Orchidea De Santis (Sanctis) (maid), Gastone Moschin (Sergeant Thorpe), Robert Hundar (Claudio Undari) (Arthur, the valet), Franco Borelli (the stranger), Ballard Berkeley (Peter, the butler), Richard Caldicot (Mr. Caldicot, a lawyer), Harry Hutchinson (Harry, the gardener)

An aristocratic English family gather for the reading of their father's will. The family are dismayed to find that everything has been left to Barbara, the deceased's favourite daughter. The butler is soon found stabbed to death and Sergeant Thorpe, the local bobby, telephones Scotland Yard for assistance. Inspector Grey arrives and he and Barbara narrowly escape being shot. Cousin Ted and his wife Pauline are both killed. Sergeant Thorpe recalls some photos which Ted asked to have developed. An enjoyable spoof of Agatha Christie's murder mysteries, **The Weekend Murders** offers a catalogue of untimely deaths and plot twists. This is a film which constantly undermines audience expectations. The pre-credits sequence, which takes place on a golf course, is typical of the film's satirical stance. The game is rudely interrupted by the discovery of a hand sticking out of the sandpit and as Tchaikovsky's *First Piano Concerto* blares onto the sound track, accompanied by rapid gun-fire, the film cross-cuts between close-ups of the possible suspects. The identity of the deceased is not revealed until roughly halfway through this tale because several other murders, as revealed in extended flashbacks, have to occur first! And as a change to convention, it's the butler (Ballard Berkeley, The Major in **Fawlty Towers**) who is offered to begin with. The film continues in the same vein by presenting both real and fake

beats the work of an annoying prankster called Georgie who even pretends to commit suicide for a laugh). In another inversion of the norm, the Scotland Yard detective is a buffoon but the local plod, an apparently simple sergeant, is actually the one who solves the case. Even the stock-character of a pretty maid, usually a subservient sex object, is revealed to be a power-playing imp who delights in taunting Georgie. But beneath the comic surface, scripters Fabio Pittorru and Massimo Felisatti (who penned a number of serious thrillers) find space for some pointed observations about class snobbery and racism. Director Michele Lupo seems in his element, having pulled cinematic gags previously - his crime movie **The Great Diamond Robbery** opens with a mock Spaghetti Western gunfight! Unfortunately, despite some good performances from most of the cast, it's not all smiles. Lance Percival and Gastone Moschin, whose deliberations have to carry the film, are allowed to mug about too much and their double-act eventually becomes tiresome.

Video:

Italy: Creazioni Home Video - as **Concerto per pistola solista**.

UK: MGM-UA - 94m, full screen as **The Weekend Murders**.

Venezuela: label unknown.

Soundtrack:

Italy: CAM CD.

WELCOME TO SPRING BREAK

Nightmare Beach - La spiaggia del terrore
Nightmare Beach ('The Beach of Terror')

Fou a lier (France)

1989 Italy/Panama Technicolor Dolby stereo
Production Company: Laguna Entertainment for Elpico S.A.

Director: Harry Kirkpatrick (Umberto Lenzi)

Producer: William J. Immerman

Story: Harry Kirkpatrick (Umberto Lenzi), Vittorio Rambaldi

Screenplay: Harry Kirkpatrick (Umberto Lenzi)

Cinematography: Antonio Climati

Editor: John Rawson

Art Director: Federico Padovan

Music: Claudio Simonetti

Special Effects: Alex Rambaldi

Cast: Nicolas De Toth (*Skip*), Sarah Buxton (*Gail*), Rawley Valverde (*Ronnie*), Lance Le Gault (*Reverend Bates*), Michael Parks (*Doc Willet*), John Saxon (*Police Chief Stryker*), Ben Stotes (*Al*), Fred Buck (*Mayor Loomis*), Debra Gallagher (*Rachael*), Turk Harley (*Malcolm*), Christina Kier (*Kimberley*), Kristy Lachance (*Lori*), Gregg Todd Davis (*Ralph*), Yamilet Hidalgo (*Trina*).

Florida: Biker Edward Santer, known as 'Diablo', is electrocuted for murder. He goes to the chair protesting his innocence, claiming he was set up by the local police chief and vowing vengeance from beyond the grave. Several teenagers are soon discovered dead, having been electrocuted. It seems Diablo's curse has come true. The mayor keeps the murders quiet because the town is celebrating 'Spring Break', an annual festival in which thousands of students spend all their dollars having a good time. Suspects include the town's alcoholic doctor, the fascist police chief and Reverend Bates, whose wayward daughter is having sex with every young man in sight.

"We come to Spring Break, the annual migration of the idiot" quips the boozy town doc because what we have here is a **Porky's**-style camp! This brainless teen-movie, with a mystery killer thrown in, assaults the viewer with a mélange of heavy metal and beach parties and is aimed here for completists only. Lenzi claims it was directed by someone called Harry Kirkpatrick, but the presence of the camper from his **Hitcher in the Dark** leads one to suspect otherwise. A fake shark-fin and characters with names like Loomis and Bates indicate that the production was never intended to be



Italian video sleeve for 'Welcome to Spring Break'

anything more than an in-joke. It's a shame that Alex Rambaldi's refreshingly gruesome electrocutions are wasted in such a throwaway movie.

Video:

Belgium, Holland: Excalibur - 87m 04s, full screen, Dutch subtitles, with superimposed video title **Nightmare Beach**.

France: GCR - good quality as **Fou a lier**.

Italy: Eden Club - as **Nightmare Beach**.

USA: IVE - as **Welcome To Spring Break**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Original Soundtrack/RCA CD - *Evil Tracks* compilation of themes by Claudio Simonetti.

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO YOUR DAUGHTERS?

La polizia chiede aiuto ('The Police Cry Help')

SOS Special Force (Denmark)

L'ame infernale (Belgium and France 'The Infernal Soul')

La police demande de l'aide (France: alternate title? 'The Police Demand Help')

Der Tod Tragt Schwarzes Leder (Germany 'The Dead Wear Black Leather')

Dood van Een Call Girl (Holland: video title 'Death of a Call-Girl')

The Co-ed Murders (USA)

1974 Italy Eastmancolor Technospes scope 90m

Production Company: Primex Italiana

Director: Massimo Dallamano

Producer: Paolo Infascelli

Based on an idea by: Ettore Sanzo

Screenplay: Ettore Sanzo, Massimo Dallamano

Cinematography: Franco Delli Colli

Editor: Antonio Siciliano

Art Director: Franco Bottari

Music: Stelvio Cipriani

Assistant Director: Mimmola [Maria Teresa] Giosi

Cast: Giovanni Ralli (*Vittoria Stori*, assistant public prosecutor), Claudio Cassinelli (*Inspector Silvestri*), Mario Adorf (*Inspector Valentini*), Franco Fabrizi (*Bruno Paglia*), Farley Granger

(Polvesi), Marina Berti (*Mr. Polvesi, Sylvia's father*), Paolo Turco (*Marcello Tosti*), Corrado Gaipa (*public prosecutor*), Micaela Pignatelli (*Rosa*), Ferdinando Murolo (*Sergeant Giardina*), Salvatore Puntillo (*'Napoli'*), Eleonora Morana, Cheryl Lee Buchanan, Roberta Paladini (*Patrizia Valentini*), Luigi Antonio Guerra, Renata Moar, Adriana Falco, Lorenzo Piani (*tenant*), Attilio Dottesio (*pathologist at murder scene*), Giancarlo Badessi (*Paglia's lawyer*), Steffen Zacharias (*Doctor Beltrame*).

An unidentified fifteen year-old girl is found hanged after an anonymous tip-off. The girl, Silvia Polvesi, is soon discovered to have been murdered. A peeping tom is caught with photos of her having sex with a teenage drop-out but he is later released due to lack of evidence. The investigation, conducted by Inspector Silvestri and the assistant public prosecutor Vittoria Stori, focuses on the girl's parents. It transpires that a private detective, Ruggero Pollente, was hired by Silvia's mother because the latter was concerned about her activities. As a conspiracy begins to emerge, Pollente's body is found dismembered and his girlfriend is subsequently attacked by a machete-wielding killer clad in motorcycle gear...

Director Massimo Dallamano returns to the schoolgirls and vice theme he successfully explored in **What Have You Done to Solange?** but this film incorporates elements of the crime thrillers which were beginning to take precedence over *gialli* at the Italian box office (hence an extended chase involving a hired killer on a motorcycle). Consequently, there is a greater emphasis on the investigation undertaken by the police and the public prosecutor. Some may find their protracted attempts to find those responsible for the bodies which begin to pile up unexciting when compared to those *gialli* in which a black-gloved killer lurks in every shadow. However, this thriller has different virtues. The sight of a naked young woman strung up is obviously a salacious image designed to draw fans of sex 'n' violence into the plot but the film soon becomes a deeply cynical, vaguely political, attack on corruption-ridden Italian society - with the usual asides aimed at (presumably left-wing) professional agitators and extremists. And the fact that Giovanni Ralli (formerly the assertive whore in *The Cold Eyes of Fear*) plays an important, powerful female figure in an Italian exploitation movie marks this one out from the crowd even though, of course, she still ends up being a woman-in-peril. Cassinelli, the cop-with-his-job-on-the-line, was in a similarly-themed thriller, *Too Young To Die*, a year later, while Farley Granger (*Amuck! So Sweet So Dead*) is wasted in a cameo role. Meanwhile, morbid thrill-seekers will be gratified to know that a cop's hand is hacked off, a chauffeur's head is cleaved, and a dismembered man's corpse is re-assembled - to the horror of his ex-wife! Dallamano doesn't stint on detailing the insidious activities of the monsters who abuse teenage girls either. One victim is distastefully described as having "traces of sperm in the vagina, the anus and the stomach" whilst the vice ring-leader, who is revealed to be impotent, apparently gains his sexual gratification using a bottle. On a final pleasant note, Stelvio Cipriani contributes a surprisingly uplifting score (particularly in view of the grim subject matter).

Video:

Belgium and France: GCR/Jacques Canestrier Video - 86m 50s, widescreen as **L'ame infernale**.

Denmark: DVS - 86m 50s, letterboxed with sleeve title **SOS Special Force**.

Greece: GLV - 84m 16s, letterboxed at 1:66:1, Greek subtitles as **The Coed Murders**.

Holland: Infi/Video Star - full screen, Dutch subtitles as **The Coed Murders**; Mike Hunter Benelux - 86m 40s, full screen, except for opening credits which are letterboxed at 1:85:1, slightly washed out print as **What Have They Done To Your Daughters?**

Italy: Gala Film - as **La polizia chiede aiuto**.

UK: Redemption - 86m 52s, letterboxed at

2:35:1 as **What Have They Done To Your Daughters?**
USA: label unknown - as **The Coed Murders**.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO SOLANGE?

Cosa avete fatto a Solange?

Das Geheimnis der Grunen Stecknadeln (Germany 'The Mystery of the Green Pin')

Unge Piger Far Kniven (Denmark 'Young Girls Get Stabbed')

Mais qu'avez-vous fait a Solange? (France 'But What Happened To Solange?')

Savage (France: video re-title)

Who's Next? (Holland)

Que habeis hecho con Solange? (Spain 'What Have You Done With Solange?')

The School That Couldn't Scream (USA: theatrical title)

Terror in the Woods (USA: alternate theatrical title)

Solange

Terror in the Schoolyard

1971 Italy/West Germany East Germany

LV: Luciano Vittorio scope 105m

Production Company: Cines

Cinematografica Italiana International Film

(Rome)/Rialto Film Prepress Production Benelux

Director: Massimo Dallamano

Producers: Leonardo Pescarolo, Fulvio Lucarelli

Story: Based on *The Clue of the New Pin* by Edgar Wallace

Screenplay: Bruno Di Geronimo, Massimo Dallamano, Peter M. Thouet

Editor: Antonio Siciliano

Art Director: Gastone Carsetti

Music: Ennio Morricone

Cast: Fabio Testi (*Professor Enrico Rossini*)

Karin Baal (*Herta Rossini*), Joachim

Fuchsberger (*Inspector Bart*), Christine

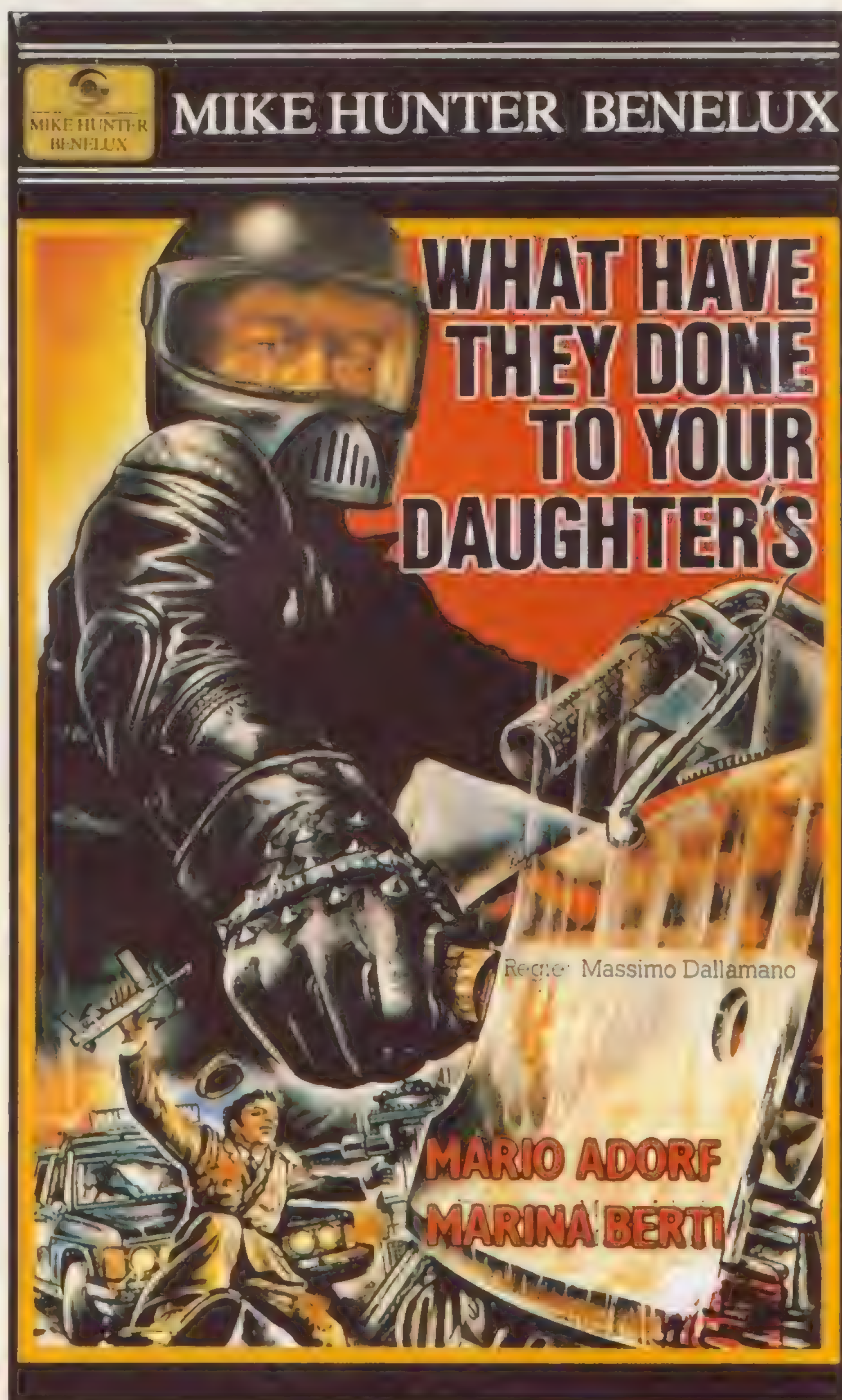
[Cristina] Galbo (*Elizabeth Seckles*), Camilla

Keaton (*Solange Beauregard*), Gunther M. St

(*Professor Beauregard Bascombe*), Claudia

Botenuth (*Brenda Pilchard*), Maria Monti (*Mrs*

Ericson), Pilar Castel (*Ruth Holden*), Giovanni





elle aujourd'hui... peut-être vous demain

SAVAGE

"Mais qu'avez-vous fait à Solange?"

MUSIQUE

ENNIO MORRICONE

UN FILM DE

M. DALLAMANO

AVEC

FABIO TESTI – KARIN BAAL – CHRISTINE GALBO

French video sleeve for 'What Have You Done To Solange?'

Di Bernardo (*Helen Edmonds*), Rainer Penkert (*school director*), Antonio Casale (*Mr. Newton*), Marco Mariani (*Mr. Ericson*), Emilia Wolkowich (*woman at rented house*), Antonio Anelli (*Enrico's friend*), Giancarlo Badessi (*fat man with beard*).

Uncredited Cast: Aristide Massaccesi (*undercover policeman with beard*).

London: Enrico Rossini, a teacher at the exclusive St. Hilda's Catholic Girls School, is punting along the River Thames with his latest teenage conquest, Elizabeth. Their lovemaking is interrupted when Elizabeth sees the flash of a knife on the riverbank. Next morning, the body of Hilda Ericson, a pupil at St. Hilda's is discovered. Rossini races over to the scene of the crime and in doing so becomes the police's prime suspect. He has trouble proving his innocence whilst trying to hide his numerous indiscretions with teenage girls from his wife and the police. Unfortunately, another girl is kidnapped and stabbed to death in a park, and Elizabeth is drowned in a bath...

Solange is a film which seems to split genre fans into two distinct groups: the lovers and the loathers. Guess which side this reviewer takes? The film offers some truly oddball red herrings, sumptuous 'scope cinematography (courtesy of Joe D'Amato), some cheesy subjective camera shots from the killer's point of view, Morricone's classy score (which alternates between a sanguine main theme and some atonal jazz pieces), authentic London locations and a truly sordid plot. Yes, you've guessed correctly, **Solange** is a great *giallo*. The film's detractors have cited its leisurely pace and the fact that its title is somewhat enigmatic for a large part of the narrative. In its defence, **Solange** is an early Seventies mystery which moves along accordingly, clue by clue. Admittedly, it's slightly overlong but most films from this era aren't exactly rapidly paced, including Argento's much lauded movies. In comparison, many Nineties films are edited like pop videos but prove to be just as throwaway. As to the film's second crime, it's not as if movie titles have ever been important or partic-

ularly relevant. After all, did audiences spend most of **The Bird with the Crystal Plumage** waiting for the appearance of a glass-tailed parrot? Does **A Clockwork Orange** feature wind-up fruit or is **Reservoir Dogs** about a canine water-supply? Titles are sometimes deliberately vague or often just a good box office pull. Another positive aspect of Dallamano's film is the way that the film takes time (yes, takes time) to show the breakdown of the Rossini's relationship and its redevelopment. Aside from its tenuous Edgar Wallace storyline, the presence of Joachim Fuchsberger and Karin Baal cements the link between German 'krimi' horror-thrillers and the sleazier thrillers which Italians specialised in. This was the first of Dallamano's films involving schoolgirls and vice. He went on to direct **What Have They Done To Your Daughters?** and provide the key ideas for **Rings of Fear**.

Video:

Belgium: Challenge - 102m 12s, uncut, letterboxed at 2:35:1, English language.
Benelux: Redemption - 102m 12s, letterboxed at 1:85:1, excellent quality print, English language as **Cosa avete fatto a Solange?**
France: Challenge/Initial - 101m 45s, uncut, letterboxed at 2:35:1 with sleeve title **Savage** and on-screen title **Savage: Mais... Qu' Avez-Vous Fait a Solange?**; Hollywood - as **Mais... Qu' Avez-Vous Fait a Solange?**
Germany: Taurus Video 'Edgar Wallace' series as **Das Geheimnis der grünen Stecknadel**.
Holland: Empire - approx. 102m, full screen, washed-out print, tacky sleeve artwork, pan and scan as **What Have You Done To Solange?**
Italy: GVR - approx. 107m, letterboxed at 2:05:1 as **Cosa avete fatto a Solange?**
UK: Redemption - cut by 2 minutes 15 seconds with a BBFC '18' certificate, letterboxed as **What Have You Done To Solange?** The front cover sleeve design is one of Redemption's worst: the young woman looks like a clown!

WHO KILLED THE PROSECUTOR AND WHY?

Terza ipotesi su un caso di perfetta strategia criminale

('Third Hypothesis in the Case of a Perfect Criminal Plot')

1972 Italy Eastmancolor Staco Film 92m

Production Company: Castor Film

Productions/Ital-Victoria Film

Director: Joseph Warren [Giuseppe Vari]

Screenplay: Thomas Lang

Cinematographer: Franco Villa

Editor: Giuseppe Vari

Art Director: Danilo Zanetti

Music: Mario Bertolazzi

Cast: Lou Castel (*Carlo Ossani*), Beba Loncar (*Olga, Carlo's girlfriend*), Adolfo Celi (*Inspector Vezzi*), Massimo Serato (*Mario Ceccarelli, alias Ivan Smirkov, alias Uncle Fifi*), Umberto D'Orsini (*Romano*) Renato Baldini, Consalvo Dell'Arti (*Portella*), Antonio La Raina (*Mauri*), Carlo Landa (*Roversi*), Carla Mancini (*cloak attendant at night club*), Renato Malavasi (*Vincenzo Rocca*), Fortunato Arena (*Salvatore Aniello*), Domenico Maggio (*Garuti*).

Carlo, a young photographer, is making love with his girlfriend at the beach when he witnesses a murder being feebly staged to look like a car accident. Carlo takes incriminating shots of the murderers (the victim turns out to be the local public prosecutor) and attempts to sell them to various interested parties, including a gangster and a newspaper owner. One of the murderers' accomplices, a lowlife criminal is gunned down by a black-gloved assassin, while another is stabbed to death. The pornographer who helped Carlo sell his pics is garroted and Olga, Carlo's girlfriend, is beaten to death...

This film combines elements of the Mafia gangster genre with *gialli* staples and benefits slightly from a mildly satirical approach. For example, the always impressive Massimo Serato, in the role of a pornographer nicknamed 'Uncle Fifi', knowingly comments that "this is not like a cheap film" and the gruff mobster, played by

ELFANTS 7/7/77 ADMIS

Was het Verkrachting...?



Mais... qu'avez-vous fait à Solange ?

met / avec

FABIO TESTI

KARIN BALL

JOACHIM FUCHSBERGER

CHRISTINE GALBO

Regie **MASSIMO DALLAMANO** - Muziek **ENNIO MORRICONE** - **EASTMANCOLOR**

Fortunato Arena, wears an elaborate hairnet. Unfortunately, in an otherwise lacklustre movie, Lou Castel proves to be an uninspiring protagonist whose greedy motives instil little sympathy. On the other hand, Adolfo Celi, who was in several *gialli* (*Death Knocks Twice*; *The Eye in the Labyrinth*; *Who Saw Her Die?*, and others) is a character actor whose presence adds a certain 'something' to every movie he appears in. Mild violence and some brief nudity (a black actress dances topless in a nightclub for no other reason than to show some nudity) hardly compensate for the lack of narrative drive but, in a welcome change from the norm, the killer's identity is not blindingly obvious. Veteran director Giuseppe Vari worked in most genres, his most notable productions being *War Against the Zombies*, in which an army of the living dead march on Imperial Rome, and *Sister Emanuelle*, a quirky Laura Gemser vehicle.

Video:

Norway: In Video - 86m 14s, letterboxed, English language, Norwegian subtitles as *Terza ipotesi su un caso di perfetta strategia criminale*.

WHO SAW HER DIE?

Chi l'ha vista morire? ('Who Saw Her Die?')
Verta Venetsiassa (Finland: video sleeve title)
 1972 Italy/West Germany/Yugoslavia
 Technicolor Techniscope 97m
 Production Company: Doria G. Film/Roas
 Produzioni (Rome)/Dieter Geissler
 Filmproduktion (Munich)/Jadran Film (Zagreb)
 Director: Aldo Lado
 Producer: Enzo Doria (Enzo Passadore), Dieter Geissler
 Story and Screenplay: Massimo D'Avak, Francesco Barilli, Aldo Lado



Above: Italian sleeve with typical giallo imagery for 'You'll Die at Midnight'

Below: Kitchen appliances come in handy in 'You'll Die at Midnight'

Cinematographer: Franco Di Giacomo
 Editor: Angelo Curi, Jutta Brandstaedter
 Art Director: Gisella Longo, Alessandro Parenzo
 Music: Ennio Morricone
 Music Director: Bruno Samale
 Second Unit Director: Vittorio De Sisti
 Cast: George Lazenby (*Franco Serpieri*), Anita Strindberg (*Elizabeth Serpieri*), Peter Chatel (*Phillip Bernard*), Adolfo Celi, (*Sarafian*), Dominique Boschero (*Ginevra Storelli*), Rosemarie Lindt (*Gabriella*), George Willing (*Phillip*), Piero Vida (*journalist*), José Quaglio (*Bonaiuti, a lawyer*), Alessandro Haber (*Father James*), Nicoletta Elmi (*Roberta Serpieri*), Giovanni Forti Rosselli, Sandro Grinfa (*Inspector De Donato*), Vittorio Fanfori, Carlo Hollesch, Luigi Antonio Guerra.

In the French Alps, a young girl is murdered by a woman in black. In Venice, sculptor Franco Serpieri's daughter Roberta is killed by the same mysterious figure. Franco's estranged wife Elizabeth arrives following the tragedy. The grieving father begins a frantic search to track down his daughter's murderer. He uncovers a group of decadent bourgeois characters who are involved in clandestine sex sessions... With its Venetian settings and child-murders, *Who Saw Her Die?* is a coincidental precursor to Nicolas Roeg's classic *Don't Look Now*, made the following year. Both mysteries are evocative studies of tragedy, but Lado's film also presents a scathingly pessimistic attitude towards human behaviour. The cynical ending shows the inept police inspector on the case taking credit for revealing the killer's identity, when all the detective work was carried out by the dead child's father. Perhaps not as distinctive as the director's *The Short Night of the Glass Dolls* (made the same year), *Who Saw* is nonetheless a riveting *giallo* with some gorgeous photography by Franco Di Giacomo. The



film's impact is significantly increased by a memorably infectious Morricone score featuring vocals by Edda Dell Orso and a child choir. Nicoletta Elmi is a child actress who can convey real emotion and her character's death is one of the most poignant moments in the film. Unfortunately, one-off James Bond George Lazenby proves to be the film's Achilles Heel. For once, even the dubbers who provide the Italian actors with their English voices are more eloquent, and stone-faced Lazenby merely flaps about from scene to scene in an awful coat. Co-scripter Francesco Barilli went on to direct the renowned **The Perfume of the Lady in Black** (1974).

Video:

Finland: Walthers Video - 90m 34s, full screen as **Who Saw Her Die?**

UK: Redemption - 90m 21s, letterboxed, superb quality print as **Who Saw Her Die?**

Soundtrack:

Italy: Gemelli LP with ten tracks.

YOU'LL DIE AT MIDNIGHT

Morirai a mezzanotte ('To Die at Midnight')

Carol Will Die At Midnight

Midnight Horror (France)

Midnight Killer

1986 Italy Telecolor Eastmancolor 88m

Production Company: Dania Film/Reteitalia

Director: John Old Jr. [Lamberto Bava]

Story: Dardano Sacchetti

Screenplay: Dardano Sacchetti, John Old Jr. [Lamberto Bava]

Cinematographer: Gianlorenzo Battaglia

Editor: John Old Jr. [Lamberto Bava]

Art Director: Davide Bassan

Music: Claudio Simonetti

Cast: Valeria D'Obici (*Professor Anna Berardi*),

Leonardo Treviglio (*Nicola*), Lea Martino, Eliana

Hoppe, Barbara Scoppa, Massimo Baratta,

Loredana Romito, Paolo Malco (*Inspector Pierro*

Terzi), Lara Wendel (*Carol Terzi*), Dino Conti,

Marcello Modugno, Loredana Guerra,

Gianpaolo Saccarola (*Mozetti, the nightwatch-*

man), Peter Pitsch.

Uncredited Cast: Lamberto Bava (*police pho-*

tographer).

Nicola, a cop, spies on his wife Sarah buying sexy black panties and realises that she is having an affair. Following a violent confrontation, he leaves her. Immediately after, whilst taking a shower, Sarah is stabbed to death with an icepick. Believing it to be a simple crime of passion, the police assign Inspector Pierro Terzi to bring his former colleague in. But Professor Anna Berardi, a criminal psychologist who is friends with both men, believes that Nicola is innocent. She suggests that the real killer is Franco Tribbo, a maniac known as 'The Midnight Killer' who supposedly died in a hospital fire several years previously. Terzi is not convinced but Nicola is killed and the murders continue...

Although this is hardly a ground-breaking genre entry and sometimes reveals its televisual origins, it still has enough style and savage imagery to make it a must-see for *giallo* regulars. A murder in a disused theatre is suitably Argento-esque and at certain points the film is entertainingly genre-referential: a female student is seen reading a *giallo* paperback called 'Blood' which incorporates images from **Tenebrae** on its cover. In another nod to that key movie, a female shop assistant has underwear (as opposed to pages from a novel) stuffed into her mouth. There are also references to **The Bird With the Crystal Plumage** and **Torso**. Unfortunately, as in the latter film, the pace slows somewhat for the final battle of wits between the killer and the heroine (whose short-cropped hair marks her out as being the survivor). On the plus side, Paolo Malco's detective figure - who seems to have been chosen as a focal point for the maniac's attentions - is more likeable than most, while Simonetti's score is an agreeable effort which sticks in the mind. The revelation of the killer's identity and motive never explains the taunting misogyny evidenced earlier in the film or the title's allu-



Tacky video sleeve for 'The Young, the Evil and the Savage'

sion to midnight, but dumb machismo and catchpenny misnomers are endemic features of exploitation cinema.

Video:

Denmark: A-S Panorama Video - 84m 42s, full screen as **You'll Die at Midnight**.

France: Prosperpine - as **Midnight Horror**.

Italy: AVO Film - 84m 34s, full screen as

Morirai a mezzanotte.

Japan: label unknown.

Soundtrack:

Italy: Beat CD - combined with themes from **Aenigma** and **Conquest**.

THE YOUNG, THE EVIL AND THE SAVAGE

Nude... si muore ('Naked... One's Dead')

Le sadique de la 13eme heure (Belgium

'The Sadist of the 13th Hour')

Sieben Jungfrauen Fur Den Teufel

(Germany 'Seven Young Girls For the Devil')

Schoolgirl Killer (USA: video re-title)

Sette vergini per il diavolo (Italy: alternate title? 'Seven Virgins for the Devil')

1968 Italy Eastmancolor Cromoscope 98m

Production Company: B.G.A./Super

International Pictures

Director: Anthony Dawson [Antonio Margheriti]

Producers: Virgilio De Blasi, Dante Amatulli

Story: Giovanni Simonelli

Screenplay: Antonio Margheriti, Franco Bottari

Cinematography: Fausto Zuccoli

Editor: Otello Colangeli

Art Director: Antonio Visone

Music: Carlo Savina

Assistant Director: Renato Savino

Cast: Michael Rennie (*Inspector Durand*), Mark

Damon (*Richard*), Eleonora Brown (*Lucille*),

Sally Smith (*Lucy*), Patrizia Valturri (*Denise*),

Ludmilla Lvova, Alan Collins [Luciano Pigozzi]

(*La Floret*), Franco De Rosa (*police sergeant*),

Vivienne Stapleton, Ester Masing (*Miss Martin*),

Aldo De Carellis, John Hawkwood [Gianni Di

Benedetto] (*Di Brazzi*), Valentino Macchi (*police-*

man), Umberto Papiri, Kathleen Parker

[Caterina Trentini], Lorenza Guerrieri (*Jill*),
Malisa Longo, Paola Natale, Sylvia D'Ovidio
[aka Silvia Dionisio].

A woman is strangled in the bath by a black-gloved killer who disposes of her body in a large trunk. The trunk is delivered to St. Hilda College, an exclusive finishing school. Betty-Anne, one of the female students, is strangled in the school cellar. The police, led by Inspector Durand, are called in to investigate. Suspects include La Floret, the voyeuristic gardener; Di Brazzi, the new swimming instructor; Mrs Clay, the summer school French mistress; an old professor who collects birds; and a philandering young teacher called Richard. The murders continue but Jill, a keen amateur detective, helps the police identify the unlikely killer...

Saddled with an inappropriately upbeat opening ditty called *Nightmare* (which sounds like the Sixties **Batman** theme) and a jovial Carlo Savina score, this superficial thriller fails as exploitation and might as well have been called 'Carry on Giallo'. The jocular tone is evident throughout, as various characters, including a smug Don Juan and an annoying English girl, who spends her time playing with walkie-talkie radios, creep about in the school grounds (the same locations used in **Libido**). It's a shame that the film takes such a light-hearted approach because the potentially salacious combination of a girls school and a warped killer is usually a winning formula (as in **Solange**). Therefore, a lesbian sub-plot, which is usually the excuse for some **Slaughter Hotel**-style sapphic groping, is introduced but allowed to go nowhere. And the Italian release allows only a flash of nipple extra. The well choreographed climax reveals that the murderer, motivated by greed, carried out the series of crimes in order to cover up the first, and only necessary, killing.

Video:

Italy: AVO Film - 93m 09s, full screen as

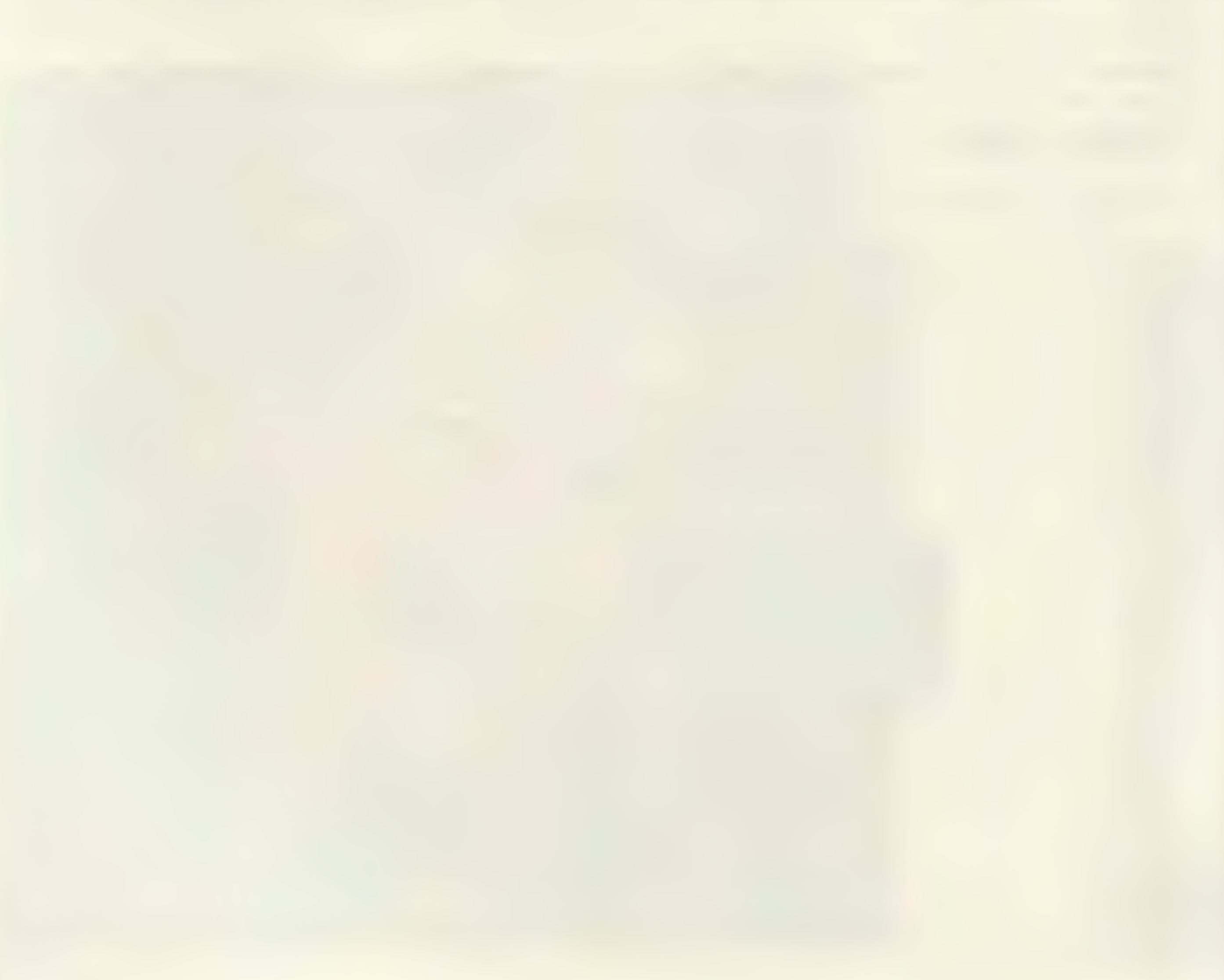
Nude... si muore.

USA: Air Video - 77m 32s, full screen, terrible print. No on-screen title, with sleeve title

Schoolgirl Killer. Large cardboard box sleeve features tacky artwork; Creature Feature - 80m 53s as **The Young, the Evil and the Savage.**



'You'll Die at Midnight'



HIDDEN TREASURES!

This section of the book was originally conceived as a straightforward appendix which provided credits and brief synopses for some of the more elusive *gialli* which were unavailable for review. However, at the eleventh hour, I received additional material from two sources. Respected film researcher Julian Grainger kindly provided information regarding some recent (and largely unacknowledged) *gialli*, and an Italian expert on cinema, Roberto Curti, has written some entertaining and informative reviews for a number of obscure titles. Consequently, this appendix is now a groundbreaking reference source for those seeking pleasures beyond the realms of widely available spaghetti bloodbaths. Read on, and enter the world of the elusive *gialli*...



A.A.A. MASSAGGIATRICE BELLA PRESENZA OFFRESI...

'A.A.A. Masseuse, Good-Looking, Offers Her Services...')

Caresses a domicile (France)

1972 Italy Telecolor 85m

Production Company: Tarquinia Cinematografica

Director: Miles Deem (Demofilo Fidani)

Story: Demofilo Fidani

Screenplay: Demofilo Fidani, Mila Vitelli

Valenza

Cinematography: Aldo Giordani

Editor: Piera Bruni

Art Director: Mila Vitelli Valenza

Music: Lallo (Coriolano) Gori

Assistant Director: Filippo Perrone

Cast: Simone Blondell (Simonetta Vitelli), Jerry Colman, Raffaele Curi, Carlo Gentili, Ettore Manni, Hunt Powers, Giancarlo Prete, Franco Ressel, Paola Senatore (Cristina), Mario Valdemarin, Howard Ross (Renato Rossini), Armando Bottin, Paul Crain (Enzo Pulcrano), Giorgio Gravina, Carla Mancini, Lucky McMurray (Luciano Conti), Yvonne Sanson.

The father of a bourgeois family murders all those he holds responsible for turning his daughter Cristina into a call-girl. The title of this obscurity is somewhat misleading - it's often mistaken for a sex comedy when it's actually a violent thriller about a mysterious black-gloved, razor-wielding maniac who murders prostitutes. **A.A.A. Massaggiatrice...** is a classified advert offering sexual services). This was former art director Demofilo Fidani's only venture into *giallo* territory - he is best known for directing a number of threadbare westerns. It was also Paola Senatore's first starring role; the beautiful red-headed actress later fell from grace and made a couple of hardcore flicks. Amongst the cast are *giallo* red herring regulars Howard Ross and Franco Ressel.

A... COME ASSASSINO

('A... For Assassin')

1966 Italy black and white 90m

Production Company: Bival Film

Director: Ray Morrison (Angelo Dorigo)

Producer: Walter Brandi

Story: Ernesto Gastaldi

Screenplay: Roberto Natale, Sergio Bazzini

Cinematography: Aldo Tonti

Art Direction: Amedeo Mellone

Music: Nella Nannuzzi

Assistant Director: Lawrence Faralis

Cast: Alan Steel (Sergio Ciani) (Giacomo), Mary Arden (Angela), Ivano Davoli (Armando), Aiche Nana (Adriana), Charlie Charun (Julien), Giovanna Galletti (Aunt Marta), Gilbert Mash (Gilberto Mazzi) (Inspector Matt), Roland Redman (Sergeant Robson), Barbara Penn (Mary), Aldo Rendine (Jackson), Frank Fisher (Franco Pesce) (Peter), John Heston (Ivano Staccioli) (George).

A... come assassino depicts a chain of murders perpetrated in a sinister castle after the mysterious death of a rich, old man... Forget Agatha Christie, this is a delirious Italian whodunit! While all the relatives are trying to frame/kill/double-cross each other, there is plenty of fun for those in an altered state of mind: the convoluted, byzantine plot twists become more and more laughable, while Dorigo stumbles upon every single mystery movie cliché since **The Cat and the Canary**, and mid-way there is a five minute flashback of everything we've just seen in the previous forty minutes. The title refers to a dagger with an A carved on the handle which plays a very important part in the mystery... The final solution is so wacky and gratuitous it's simply irresistible. For entertainment value, this movie is much better than Dorigo's companion piece **Assassino senza volto** (1967). Producer Walter Brandi wore fangs as the bloodsucker in Piero Regnoli's **Playgirls and the Vampire** as well as playing the (wooden) hero in many Sixties Gothic horrors (he was great in **Bloody Pit of Horror**).

A TUTTE LE AUTO DELLA POLIZIA...

('Calling All Police Cars...')

1975 Italy Eastmancolor Stacofilm 100m

Production Company: Capitol

Cinematografica/Jarama Film

Director: Mario (Mariano Cajano) Caiano

Producer: Renato Angiolini

Story: based on the novel 'Violenza a Roma' by Massimo Felisatti

Screenplay: Fabio Pittorru, Massimo Felisatti

Cinematography: Pier Luigi Santi

Editor: Romeo Ciatti

Art Director: Renato Postiglione

Music: Lallo (Coriolano) Gori

Assistant Director: Edoardo Salerno

Cast: Antonio Sabato (Inspector Fernando Solmi), Luciana Paluzzi (Inspector Giovanna Nunziante), Enrico Maria Salerno (Doctor Carraro), Gabriele Ferzetti (Professor Andrea Icardi), Elio Zamuto (Professor Giacometti), Ettore Manni (Enrico Tummoli alias 'Momolo'), Marino Mase (Franz Hekker/Pagano), Bedy Moratti (Icardi's wife), Adriana Fiore (stripper), Franco Ressel (gynaecologist), Margherita Horowitz (Antonietta, Icardi's nurse), Tino Bianchi (police inspector), Valentino Macchi (petrol pump attendant), Andrea Lala (Marshall Attardi), Benedetto Benedetti, Mario Erpichini (Minister Mordini), Anna Mirafiore (Fiorella Icardi), Adriano Amidei Migliano (police dog instructor), Attilio Dottesio (coroner), Ida Di Benedetto (house madam), Leila Ducci (assistant gynaecologist), Gloria Piedmonte, Andrea Scotti (head of scientific team), Fernando Cerulli, Fulvio Mingozzi.

Fiorella Icardi, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a prominent Roman surgeon mysteriously disappears and is found dead in Lake Albano. Clues lead the police to Enrico Tummoli, a perverted voyeur. By tailing Carla, one of Fiorella's classmates, Inspector Carraro uncovers a teenage vice racket organised by a shady Dutchman, Franz Hekker, in cahoots with an ex-government minister. Next, a black-gloved killer slashes a gynaecologist's throat with a scalpel (he practised abortions for Hekker's girls). Other victims include Tummoli (who was blackmailing the killer) and Carla...

A tutte... begins with detailed police procedures and focuses on character development rather than action. Accordingly, the result is one of director Caiano's most successful efforts; a decidedly more personal work than



IL BACO DA SETA

his other crime/thriller films of the period (such as *Weapons of Death*). Uniformly good performances (particularly Ferzetti as Fiorella's father) help overcome some of the rough edges, such as the usual hypocritical moralism so common in this kind of film. But since this is a *giallo*, Caiano doesn't spare the blood, nor gratuitous nudity: the murders are really nasty, with arterial blood spraying from an open jugular or (in Carla's demise) covering a naked body in rivulets. The sleazy subplot is exploited from the very beginning, with Ferzetti maniacally photographing his semi-nude daughter, and by the presence of an ill-fated voyeur.

Video:

Italy: CVR - uncut, letterboxed, good quality as **A tutte le auto della polizia...**

AGENZIA

CINEMATOGRAFICA

('Cinematographic Agency')

1993 Italy colour

Director: Nini' Grassia

Story and Screenplay: Nini' Grassia

Music: Nini' Grassia, Aldo Tamborelli

Cast: Alex Damiani, Daniela Paganini, Saverio Vallone, Giovanna Chicco, Cristina Barsacchi, Luigi Aprile, Alessia Zadel, Anna Sibona.

A sleazy thriller from Nini' Grassia, a director responsible for a steady flow of erotic melodramas since his first feature *La pagella* (1980). James, an unscrupulous director, and George are the joint owners of a film studio. One morning, the corpse of a messenger boy is found by a cleaning lady, but the identity of the youth's killer remains a mystery. Gloria, a stunning

actress who is seeing George, rejects unwelcome advances from James. Determined to get the attractive actress into bed, James reveals that he has video footage which shows her killing the messenger. It emerges that she murdered the young man after he tried to sexually assault her. However, there is a twist...

AMORE E MORTE NEL GIARDINO DEGLI DEI

('Love and Death in the Garden of the Gods')

1972 Italy Eastmancolor Telecolor 90m

Production Company: Lido

Cinematografica/Hermann Film

Director: Sauro Scavolini

Producers: Armando Bertuccioli, Romano Scavolini

Story: Anna Maria Gelli

Screenplay: Sauro Scavolini

Cinematography: Romano Scavolini

Editor: Francesco Bertuccioli

Art Director: Herta Schwartz Scavolini

Music: Giancarlo Chiaramello

Assistant Director: Michele Brancato

Cast: Peter Lee Lawrence [Karl Hirenbach]

(*Manfredi*), Erika Blanc [Erica Bianchi

Colombatto] (*Azzurra*), Ezio Marano, Orchidea

Di Santis [Sanctis] (*Viola*), Richard Melville

(*Timothy*), Frank Von Treuberg, Vittorio Duse

Bruno Boschetti, Carla Mancini.

Having been alone since they were children, brother and sister Manfredi and Azzurra, have developed a morbid love/hate relationship. Azzurra falls in love and gets married, but she still tries to keep her brother by her side. Meanwhile, Manfredi has a fling with a young woman called Viola. Azzurra's marriage turns out to be a disaster and things get worse when she reveals that Manfredi is not her brother after all (he had been adopted to replace her real brother, who was still-born). She takes an overdose and her adopted brother makes it look like attempted suicide. But Viola saves her and the two women become more than mere friends. The frustrated and embittered Manfredi starts getting rid of everyone in order to have Azzurra to himself. Later, a German ornithologist accidentally discovers the truth. Manfred tries to kill him too...

This strange, unbalanced film offers some unusual ideas and the complex temporal structure (it begins with the discovery of a tape recording of Azzurra's meetings with her ill-fated psychoanalyst, and then proceeds to jump back and forth in time) is a welcome change, creating a fascinating mosaic in which every piece gradually reveals an unexpected part of the story. On the downside, Sauro Scavolini's direction isn't strong enough to sustain the languid pacing and the latter half drags due to heavy-handed travelogue sequences and jerky passages. Still, the morbid atmosphere is so obsessive you can almost smell it, while the setting (old Spoleto, also seen in Fulci's *Murder to the Tune of the Seven Black Notes*) is simply breathtaking - and so is Erika Blanc! Scavolini collaborated on the screenplays for key *gialli* such as *The Double*; *Next Gently Before She Dies* and *The Scorpion's Tail*. Cast members Peter Lee Lawrence and Erika Blanc appeared together again in the vapid *Love and Death on the Edge of a Razor*.

ASSASSINIO MADE IN ITALY

('Murder Made in Italy')

Il segreto del vestito giallo (re-release title: 'The Secret of the Yellow Dress')

Il segreto de Bill North (Spain)

1963 Italy/Spain/France Eastmancolor

Totalscope 100m

Production Company: Apo Film (Rome)/Midega Film (Madrid)/Dici France (Paris)

Director: Silvio Amadio

Story and Screenplay: Giovanni Simonelli, Silvio Amadio

Cinematography: Mario Pacheco

Editor: Marcello Malvestito

Art Direction: Enrique Alarcon

Music: Armando Trovajoli
 Assistant Director: Augusto Fenollari
 Cast: Cyd Charisse (*Shelley North*), Hugh O'Brien (*Dick Sherman*), Mario Feliciani, Alberto Closas, Juliette Mayniel, Philippe Lemaire, Gina Rovere, Beni Deus, Philippe Alexandre, Gianni Baghino, Franco Giacobini, Alberto Dalbes, Carlos Casaravilla, Memmo Carotenuto, Eleonora Rossi Drago (*Erika*).

Rome: A man is found dead with heroin in his pocket and Bill North, a tourist suspected of being a drug dealer, disappears. Dick Sherman, an American journalist, investigates with the help of colleague Erica Tiller. A former gangster, Charlie Graziano, who is also investigating North's activities is convinced that he had nothing to do with drugs but is killed before he can discover the truth. Sherman discovers that the missing man purloined his father-in-law's aircraft construction plans. The reporter is too late to save North but he finally unmasks and kills the perpetrator of the crimes.

Veteran director Silvio Amadio specialised in creating characters who manipulate others (usually by sexual means) as illustrated in the sublime **Smile Before Death**, **Amuck!** and **So Young, So Lovely, So Vicious**.

L'ASSASSINO E' QUELLO CON LE SCARPE GIALLE

(The Killer's the One with the Yellow Shoes)
 1995 Italy colour 97m
 Production Company: M.G. S.r.l.
 Director: Filippo Ottoni
 Producer: Fulvio Lucisano and Leo Pescarolo
 Story and Screenplay: Roberto Ciufoli, Francesca Draghetti, Tiziana Foschi, Pino Insegno, Filippo Ottoni
 Cinematography: Raffaele Mertes
 Editor: Enzo Meniconi
 Art Direction: Mario Rossetti
 Music: Stefano Mainetti
 Cast: Roberto Ciufoli (*Roberto Spaventa*), Francesca Draghetti, Tiziana Foschi, Pino Insegno, Dario Cantarelli, Paolo Maffioletti, Rossana Di Lorenzo, Fabio Camilli, Marianna Xagicristova, Giuseppe Quintale.

As a child, Roberto witnessed a murder committed by a school friend in the local theatre. Twenty-five years later, his rich, old aunt promises him that he will be her only heir if he can re-open the now abandoned theatre. Roberto and his friends begin rehearsing *Hamlet*, but their complete lack of talent is not the only problem: there is a serial killer lurking in the theatre and several murders ensue. Roberto, recalling the crime he witnessed in childhood, recognises the murderer... Part **Phantom of the Opera**, part **The Producers** (but genre aficionados will notice unintentional affinities with **The Killer Reserved Nine Seats!**), this is the silver screen debut of Ciufoli, Draghetti, Foschi and Insegno, a notorious team of television comedians called La Premiata Ditta ('The Prize-Winning Firm'). Despite the presence of expert Ottoni and talented Raffaele Mertes (responsible for stunning camerawork in Argento's **Trauma** and Soavi's **The Sect**), this film is a complete failure. Closer to a stretched sitcom than a real movie, it miserably falls on its ass every ten minutes, due to painfully unfunny gags (like Mel Brooks' recent films!), shameless overacting and a screenplay that was old hat in the Twenties. Ottoni previously directed another comedy involving murder entitled **Dumb Dicks** (aka **Detective School Dropouts**).

IL BACO DI SETA

('The Silk Worm')
 1973 Italy Eastmancolor Kodak 93m
 Production Company: Grado Film
 Director: Mario Sequi
 Story and Screenplay: Mino Roli [Erminio Pontiroli]
 Cinematography: Alvaro Lanzoni
 Editor: Maurizio Mangosi
 Art Director: Elio Balletti

Music: Mario Bertolazzi
 Assistant Director: Domenico Comanducci
 Cast: Nadja Tiller (*Smeralda Amadier*), George Hilton (*Didier*), Riccardo Garrone (*Inspector Guarnieri*), Guy Madison (*Robert, Smeralda's ex-husband*), Eva Marandi (*Yvonne, Smeralda's sister*), Evi Rigano (*Marcelle*), Mario Feliciani (*Planget, a lawyer*), Osvaldo Ruggeri (*Raffaele*), Carlos De Castro (*Anastasios Kuskas, alias Costas Mikaelis*), Vivi Gioi (*Costas' ex-lover*).

Smeralda Amadier, a retired singer, lives in an isolated villa with her secretary Marcelle and her lover Didier (but throws out the latter after catching him with another woman). Smeralda has huge debts and when creditors threaten her with bankruptcy she decides to sell her valuable jewels. That evening, she meets Costas, a handsome young man who seduces her. Next morning, there is no sign of him or the jewels. He was apparently a penniless gigolo but who was his secret partner in the theft? Sounds (even vaguely) interesting?

Unfortunately, this is a terrible film which wastes decent actors and production values during ninety minutes of cinematic oblivion. Sequi's direction is uninspired, with interior scenes which seem to last forever and look as if they were filmed one after another using the same tracking shots. For a *giallo* it lacks style, excess, violence, atmosphere. Basically, this silk worm is just an empty cocoon. It was (thankful-

ly) Sequi's only real *giallo* entry, although he previously directed a thriller called **Cronaca di un delitto** ('Chronicle of a Crime') in 1952.

Video:

Spain: label unknown.

BELLE DA MORIRE

('Too Beautiful To Live')
 1992 Italy/Spain colour
 Director: Riccardo Sesani
 Story and Screenplay: Riccardo Ghione, Pino Buricchi, Jacinto Santos
 Cinematography: Carlo Poletti
 Music: Claudio Simonetti
 Cast: Brian Peterson (*Edward Sacchi*), Adriana Russo, Jennifer Baker, Fabiola Toledo, Antonella Tomassi.

Edward Sacchi is a wealthy and apparently content married man but underneath he is driven by a desire to seduce and discard women. One of his conquests, Lucy, falls in love with him and when spurned, commits suicide. Edward is shocked but continues as before. Each of his lovers are subsequently murdered and he is arrested. However, his wife saves him by arranging an appointment with the real killer... Riccardo Sesani previously directed teen pics with unappealing titles like **Jocks** and **Dance Fever** which does not bode well for this soft-



core thriller, which takes place against a backdrop of opera. Co-screenplay Riccardo Ghione directed **Il prato macchiato di rosso** ('The Bloodstained Lawn'), a cheap and kitschy horror pic about the activities of a madman who sucks out his victims' blood with a weird machine.

CRIMINE A DUE

('Crime for Two')

La casa sulla fungaia (subtitle: 'The House on the Mushroom Bed')

1964 Italy black and white 93m

Production Company: Eco Film

Director: Roy Freemount (Romano Ferrara)

Producer: Umberto Sciarretta

Story: Marcello Coscia based on the play *La casa maledetta* by Elisa Pezzana

Screenplay: Alessandro Continenza, Marcello Coscia, Giorgio Stegani

Cinematography: Oberdan Trojani

Editor: Otello Colangeli

Art Director: Luciano De Greco

Music: Berto Pisano

Cast: John Drew Barrymore, Luisa Rivelli, Umberto D'Orsi, Jean Claudio, Ombretta Colli, Elisa Mainardi, Lisa Gastoni, Michel Francis, Massimo Carocci, Peter Dane, Piero Gerlini, Nini Rosso and his Ensemble, Serge Gebel (Sergio Gibello), Aldo Buonamano, Mary Badmayev, Claudia Younes.

In an isolated villa, Davide Lugani lives with his wife; Carlo, his brother; and their secretary Paolo. Wheelchair-bound Carlo is blind and mute, but his abnormal sensitivity allows him to predict events before they happen. Davide dies of a suspected heart attack and Carlo's nurse is shot dead. The police suspect Davide's widow as well as Paolo, who seems to be her lover. Just as the pair are about to be arrested, there is a twist...

DEATH ON THE FOUR POSTER

Delitto allo specchio - Sexy Party ('Crime in the Mirror - Sexy Party')

Les possédées du démon (France)

1964 Italy/Spain Eastmancolor scope 90m

Production Company: P.T. Cinematografica

(Rome)/Jean Josipovici (Paris)

Directors: Ambrogio Molteni, Jean Josipovici

Producer: Pasquale Tagliaferri

Story: Jean Josipovici

Screenplay: Jean Josipovici, Giorgio Stegani

Cinematography: Raffaele Masciocchi

Editor: Otello Colangeli

Art Director: Demofilo Fidani

Music: Marcello De Martino

Cast: Antonella Lualdi (*Serena*), Michel Lemoine (*Riccardo*), John Drew Barrymore (*Anthony*), Mario Valdemarin (*Carlo*), Gloria Milland (*Franca*), Luisa Rivelli (*Caterina*), Jose' Greci, Giuseppe Fortis, Vittoria Prada, Massimo Carocci, Alberto Cevenini, Maria Pia Conte, Jo Atlanta.

A group of friends decide to spend a weekend in a castle belonging to Riccardo, a moody and hyper-sensitive young artist. The only other inhabitants of the castle are a mysterious housekeeper, Caterina, and the demented Aldo. The group are joined by two friends: Serena and a young American medium, Anthony. During a seance Anthony predicts a tragedy, then leaves the castle, shocked by his own visions. An hour later, Serena is found strangled to death in bed. The others become gradually more and more diffident and suspicious, especially when another girl is murdered...

Judging by the plot synopsis this one starts out as a youth movie (there must be at least one party and dance scene) before it becomes a typical whodunit. This was Ambrogio Molteni's only film as a director but French director Josipovici also made the thriller **Delitto al night club/L'inspecteur connaît la musique**.

DELITTO D'AUTORE

('The Author's Crime')

1974 Italy Technicolor Studiocine 75m

Production Company: Cineuropa

Director: Anthony Green (Mario Sabatini)

Story and Screenplay: Mario Sabatini

Cinematography: Oberdan Troiani

Art Director: Franco Costa

Music: Franco Tamponi, Gianni Mereu

Assistant Director: Giovanni Brusatori

Cast: Sylva Koscina (*Milena*), Pier Paolo

Capponi, Luigi Pistilli, Herb Andress, Wilma

Casagrande, Krista Nell, Emilio Bonucci, Euro

Teodori, Agostino De Simone, Pier Plinio Quinti,

Alfio Cecconi, Emilio Macerata, Ubaldo

Pasqualetti, Carla Mancini.

Against the wishes of her Aunt Valeria, attractive Milena travels to Milan in order to secretly marry Marco Giraldi. Three years later, Milena returns to her hometown Fermo, where her husband's shoe business is in financial difficulties. Shortly afterwards, she is abducted, a valuable painting is stolen and Aunt Valeria is murdered. Two young villains, who carried out the dirty work, are then killed...

This provincial *giallo* apparently verges on the threshold of a cynical sex comedy.

DELITTO PASSIONALE

('Crime of Passion')

1994 Italy colour

Director: Flavio Mogherini

Cinematographer: Luigi Kuveiller

Music: Gianni Ferrio

Cast: Fabio Testi, Serena Grandi (*Tanya*),

Florinda Bolkan, Paul Martignetti.

Hungary: Callously leaving her handicapped daughter home alone, Sonya meets her lover at a hotel and is later shot to death. At her funeral the main suspects are all present: Peter, Sonya's estranged husband; Tanya, her sister and Julia, a business associate. The police inspector assigned to the case discovers that Peter is sexually involved with both of the aforementioned women. Further murders ensue...

IL DIAVOLO NEL CERVELLO

('The Devil in the Brain')

Le Diable dans la tete (France)

1971 Italy/France Eastmancolor colore LV

(Luciano Vittori) 106m

Production Company: Verona Produzioni

(Rome)/Universal Prod. France (Paris)

Director: Sergio Sollima

Producer: Maurizio Lodi Fe'

Story: Luigi Emmanuelle, Sergio Sollima

Screenplay: S. Cecchi D'Amico, Sergio Sollima

Cinematography: Aldo Scavarda

Editor: Sergio Montanari

Art Director: Giancarlo Bartolini Salimbeni

Music: Ennio Morricone

Assistant Director: Romano Scandariato



Cast: Stefania Sandrelli (*Sandra Osio De Blanc-Garces*), Keir Dullea (*Oscar Minno*), Micheline Presle (*Countess Claudia Osio De Blanc*), Tino Buazzelli (*Doctor Emilio Bontempi*), Renato Cestie (*Riccardo Garces*), Maurice Ronet (*Fabrizio Garces, Sandra's husband*), Orchidea De Santis [*Sanctis*] (*Caterina, a servant*), Gaia Germani (*Bianca Molteni*), Gabriella Lepori (*woman sun-bathing on terrace*), Elsa Boni (*nurse*), Giorgio Basso, Alberto Carrera, Bruno Boschetti, Giorgio Dolfin, Tina Maver, Naida Pedersoli, Renzo Scali.

Oscar is trying to re-establish an affair with Sandra, a disturbed young woman. Having found her husband Fabrizio shot dead and her young son Ricky standing beside him with a gun, Sandra suffered a complete breakdown and now lives in isolation with her protective mother. The latter saved the young boy from recrimination by placing the gun in his father's hand, making it seem like he committed suicide. However, things are not what they seem...

Video:

Italy: label unknown.

Soundtrack:

Italy: General Music LP with ten tracks; Screen Trax CD - *'La Paura secondo Morricone'* - this compilation features the title track.

DOUBLE MURDER

Doppio delitto ('Double the Crime')

Enquete a l'Italienne (France 'Investigation Italian Style')

1977 Italy/France Eastmancolor Technospes 108m

Production Company: Primex Italiana (Rome)/P.E.C.F. (Paris)

Director: Steno [Stefano Vanzina]

Story: based on *Doppia morte al Governo Vecchio* by Ugo Moretti

Screenplay: Agenore Incrocci, Furio Scarpelli, Stefano Vanzina

Cinematography: Luigi Kuveiller

Editor: Antonio Siciliano

Art Direction and Costumes: Mario Ambrosino

Music and Music Direction: Riz Ortolani

Cast: Marcello Mastroianni (*Inspector Bruno Baldassarre*), Agostina Belli (*Teresa Colasanti*), Ursula Andress (*Princess Anna Dell'Orso*), Peter Ustinov (*Henry Herman*), Jean-Claude Brialy (*Van Hylen*), Mario Scaccia (*Marino Cianciarelli*), Gianfranco Barra (*Cantalamezza*), Giuseppe Anatrelli (*Carru*), Serge Frederic (*Melzio*), Jean-Patrick Junoy (*Alex*), Luigi Zerbinati, Angelo Monte (*Daniele Baldassarre*), Massimiliano Monte (*Daniele*), Francesco Infantino (*restaurant owner*), Antonio Spinnato (*servant*), Caterina Dalin (*Edith*), Angelo Piazza (*the cardinal*), Nando Paone (*orchestra conductor*), Paola Orefici.

Police Inspector Bruno Baldassarre hears someone screaming from an old palace and finds two dead bodies on the stairs: the owner, Prince Prospero Dell'Orso, and electrician Romolo Colasanti; both were electrocuted. What is apparently an accident soon turns out to be murder. Bruno interrogates the suspects: Anna Dell'Orso, actress and recipient of a large life insurance; and screenplaywriter Henry Hermann. Meanwhile, Baldassarre gets to know lovely young Teresa, Colasanti's niece. After more deaths and attempted murders, Bruno realizes that Teresa is Dell'Orso's natural daughter and only heir of his immense riches: she is the murderer's next intended victim...

Prolific director Steno is joined here by a top-notch team. The film's inspiration is Luigi Comencini's superb *The Sunday Woman* which also stars Mastroianni: a murder mystery with comedy which makes great use of its typical Italian locations and characters (also see Sergio Corbucci's *Atrocious Tales of Love and Death*). Although not as good as expected, it remains a hugely enjoyable, witty affair, with plenty of funny moments and a well-constructed story. Mastroianni, as always, is very good and Andress, well, you know...

Video:

Italy: Ricordi Video.

EYES WITHOUT A FACE

Gli occhi dentro ('The Eyes Inside')

Madness(alternative export title)

1994 Italy colour

Director: Bruno Mattei

Story: Angelo Longoni, Lorenzo De Luca

Screenplay: Lorenzo De Luca

Music: Flipper Music

Cast: Carrol Farres, Gabriele Gori, Carlo Granchi.

Giovanna Dei, a young cartoonist, works on the violent comic strip 'Doctor Dark'. Unfortunately, young women are being killed in the style of the comic strip character he becomes the main suspect. The plot is reminiscent of the Spanish horror pic *Sexy Cat* (1972).

THE FINAL SCOOP

Bugie rosse ('Red Lies')

1995 Italy colour 93m

Production Company: Globe Films/Silvio Berlusconi Communications

Director: Pierfrancesco Campanella

Producers: Pietro Innocenzi, Gioia Maria Scola

Story and Screenplay: Pierfrancesco Campanella

Cinematography: Mario Vulpiani

Music: Natale Massara

Cast: Tomas Arana (*Marco*), Alida Valli (*Caterina*), Lorenzo Flaherty (*Andrea*), Gioia Maria Scola (*Adria, Marco's wife*), Gianfranco Jannuzzo (*Roberto*), Barbara Scoppa (*Marina*), Natasha Hovey (*Lucia*), Carolin Spence, Stephane Freiss.

Marco, a television journalist, reads 'red lies' on his the teletext system in order to gather material on the homosexual world for a story he's working on. Unfortunately, he is implicated in a series of murders in which the victims are all gay. Marco becomes a suspect and is forced to investigate the crimes himself in order to prove his innocence. Director Campanella's previous feature was the ominously titled



IL FIORE DAI PETALI D'ACCIAIO

IVANO STACCIOLI - PILAR VELASQUEZ
PAOLA SENATORE

con la partecipazione di

UMBERTO RAO e con ANGELO SASI e JAMES HARRIS
regia di GIANFRANCO PICCIOLI

prodotta da

MAURO BERARDI - RICCARDO CERRO per la PARVA CINEMATOGRAFICA
TECHNICOLOR - TECHNISCOPÉ

Strepitosamente... flop (1990), which starred Dalila Di Lazzaro.

IL FIORE DAI PETALI D'ACCIAIO

('The Flower with Iron Petals')

1973 Italy/Spain Technicolor Techniscopé 90m

Production Company: Parva Cinematografica (Rome)/Prod. Cin. cas D.I.A. (Madrid)

Director: Gianfranco Piccioli

Story: Gianni Martucci

Screenplay: Gianni Martucci, Gianfranco Piccioli

Cinematography: Antonio Borghesi

Editor: Attilio Vincioni

Music and Music Director: Marcello Giombini

Cast: Carroll Baker, Pilar Velasquez, Paola Senatore, Umberto Raho (*doctor*), Eleonora Morana, Angelo Bassi, Giuseppe Mattei, Alessandro Perrella.

A doctor accidentally kills his girlfriend, when he causes her to fall onto an ornamental flower which has metal spikes. He disposes of her by chopping up and then dissolving her corpse. The woman's sister accuses the doctor and an investigation begins. In the meantime, a second woman is killed and the doctor begins to receive metal petals through the post...

GIOCHI EROTICI DI UNA FAMIGLIA PERBENE

('Erotic Games in a Respectable Family')

Thrilling Story (production title)

1975 Italy Eastmancolor Cinemascope 85m

Production Company: Emat Cinematografica

Director: Vincenzo Matassi [Francesco Degli Espinosa]

Story and Screenplay: Renato Polselli

Cinematography: Angelo Baistrocchi

Editor: Roberto Colangeli

Music: Felice and Gianfranco Di Stefano

Cast: Donal O'Brien (*Professor Riccardo Rossi*), Erika Blanc (*Eva*), Malisa Longo (*Elisa*), Maria D'Incoronato (*Barbara*), Gianni Pulone, Carla Mancini.

Professor Riccardo Rossi is an uncompromising moralist and a paladin of Catholic morals. He is understandably baffled when he finds his wife Elisa in bed with another woman (whom Rossi mistakes for a man). Furious, he poisons his wife and throws her body into a lake, then brings home a prostitute, Eva, to replace her. He also begins an affair with his niece Barbara. But Elisa is not dead, as Rossi soon finds, and she is plotting with Eva to get rid of him. Rossi is more precise this time, and shoots the two women dead. However, there is a complication and more deaths ensue...

Renato Polselli's deranged mind is at work here: the story and screenplay bear the mark of his wild imagination, ferocious social satire and morbid sexual obsessions. As is often the case in Polselli's films, the setting is a bourgeois family hiding unspeakable deviations under a 'respectable' facade, while the dialogue seems like a pseudo-philosophical pamphlet intercut with bursts of absurdity and (unintentional?) humour. Despite technical incongruities (this was Degli Espinosa's only feature) the movie remains an undeservedly obscure and interesting oddity.

Video:

Italy: GVR General.

INTERRABANG

1969 Italy Eastmancolor Cromoscope 102m

Production Company: Salaria Film

Director: Giuliano Biagetti

Producer: Giancarlo Segarelli

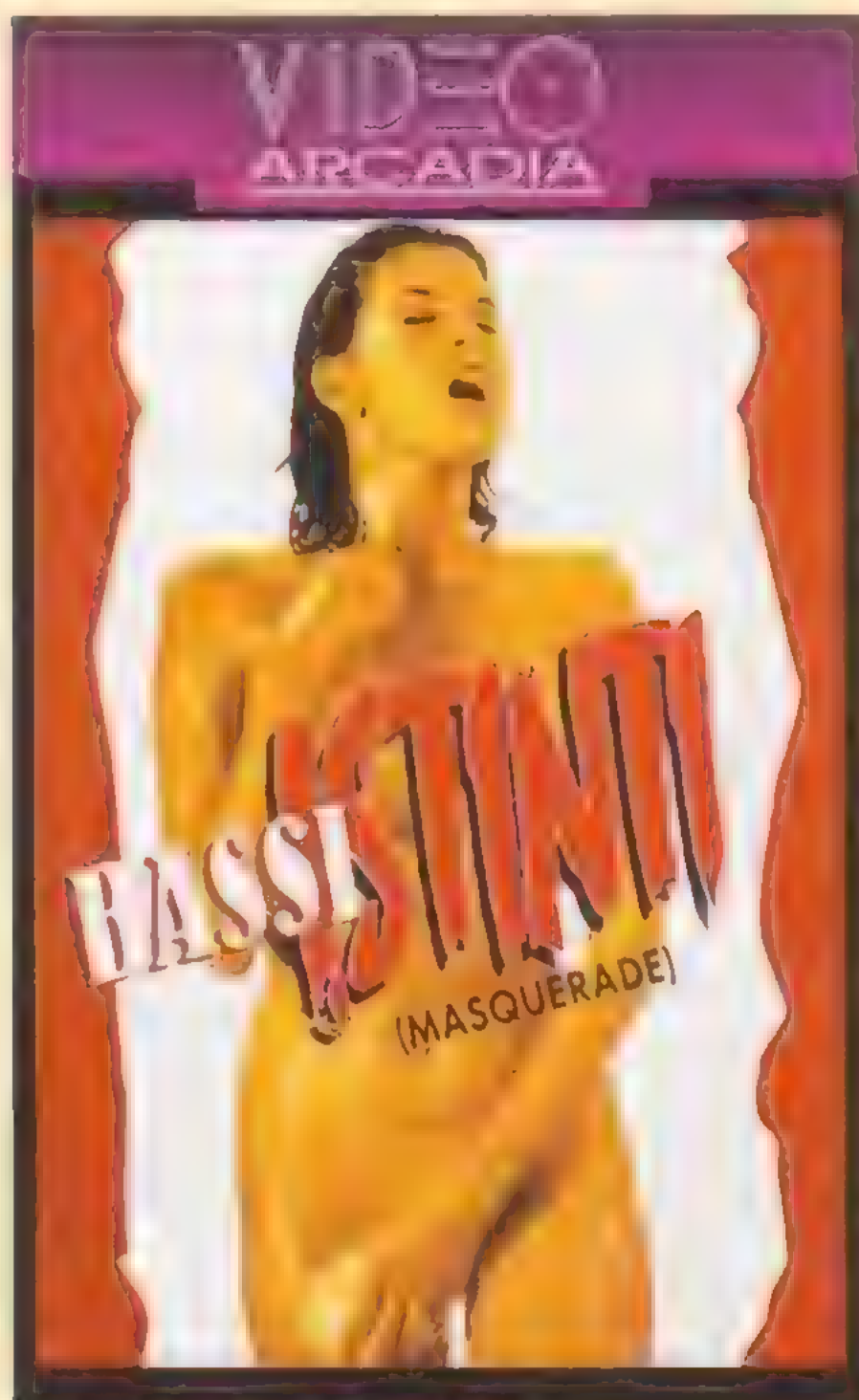
Story: based on a story by Edgar Mills

Screenplay: Luciano Lucignani, Giorgio Mariuzzo, Edgar Mills

Cinematography: Antonio Borghesi

Music and Music Direction: Berto Pisano

Editor: Marcella Bevilacqua



Art Direction: Tellino Tellini
 Assistant Director: Giorgio Mariuzzo
 Cast: Haydee Politoff (*Valeria*), Corrado Pani (*Marco*), Beba Loncar (*Anna*), Umberto Orsini (*Fabrizio*), Soshana Cohen (*Maregalit*), Edmondo Saglio, Tellino Tellini, Antonietta Fiorito.

Fabrizio, a fashion photographer; Maregalit, a nympho model; Anna, Fabrizio's wife and Valeria, her sister, land on a deserted islet for a photo-shoot. When Fabrizio temporarily leaves the women alone to buy some fuel for their yacht, a young man, Marco, joins the trio. The women are diffident: Marco could be a fugitive from a penitentiary, and the body of a policeman is hidden somewhere. He seduces all three and eventually kills Maregalit and Anna; he and Valeria are then joined by Fabrizio. The three had planned to murder Anna for her money but there's another surprise for Fabrizio, because he is in turn killed by his accomplices (who are long-time lovers). All over? Not at all, because there's a nice sting at the end...

Great title but what the hell does **Interrabang** mean? "It's a symbol made of a question mark plus an exclamation mark: it represents the uncertainties of our era". One of the things that make Italian *gialli* and fantastic films of the period so endearing are their feeble attempts to venture political and philosophical insights: Biagetti is trying to say something about the bourgeoisie, but this interesting thriller works because of its well conceived plot, a game of cat-and-mouse which could have worked on stage (but then you wouldn't have had the opportunity of seeing three gorgeous ladies dressed in scant bikinis for the whole movie!). Refreshingly, it's the male (mysterious Marco) who gets the upper hand, but there are a couple of great twists at the end which are guaranteed to leave you baffled. Berto Pisano contributes an easy listening score, and Biagetti's use of zooms make Jess Franco look positively restrained in comparison.

Video:

Italy: Capitol - 91m 40s, fullscreen except for opening credits which are letterboxed, colours are a bit washed out, as **Interrabang**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: RCA LP with ten tracks; RCA single with two tracks.

MANIA

1973 Italy Telecolor scope 85m
 Production Company: G.R.P. Cinematografica
 Director: Ralph Brown (Renato Polselli)

Story: Renato Polselli
 Screenplay: Renato Polselli
 Cinematography: Ugo Brunelli
 Editor: Roberto Colangeli
 Art Director: Giuseppe Ranieri
 Music: Umberto Cannone
 Cast: Brad Euston (*Professor Brecht/Germano*), Ivana Giordan (*Lisa*), Isarco Ravaioli (*Lailo*), Mirella Rossi (*Katia*), Eva Spadaro (*Erina*).

Professor Brecht, a renowned scientist, is obsessively experimenting in his isolated villa. The object of his studies is 'apparent death', with the intention that the human body in a cataleptic state can be cured more easily. He lives with his wife Lisa and several other people: his twin brother Germano; Katia, the waitress; Lailo, his assistant and young student Erina. Having discovered his brother's affair with Lisa, Brecht sets up a plan to kill Germano and take his place. The shock makes Erina dumb. Brecht's persecution of poor Lisa soon turns the woman mad, while Lailo, wandering

in the villa's surroundings, vainly tries to find the key to the mystery. A psychiatrist, Louis firmly believes Lisa's madness is caused by her inner anguish and seems confident in her recovery. But he's wrong: the demented woman kills Katia and then throws herself out of a window. Brecht takes back his own identity, but his actions will have further tragic consequences. Perhaps Polselli's most obscure film, **Mania** received a marginal distribution three years after it was made, and there is a possibility that the director had planned to make a version with hardcore inserts, just as he did with his other films of the period.

MASQUERADE

Bassi istinti (Italy: re-release title 'Base Instinct')

Masquerade: Intrigo internazionale (Italy: video sleeve re-title)

The Black Glove (sales title?)

1991 Italy colour

Production Company: Star 90



TECHNISCOPE · COLOR

70 m/m

UNA COPRODUCCION
ITALO-ESPANOLA
PRODUCCION POR
EDUARDO DE MANZANOS

DIRECTOR
ALBERT J. WALKER

LUCIANO PIGOZZI

JANINE REYNAUD

CORBRAS HUMANAS

GIORGIO ARDISON ERIKA BLANC ALBERTO DE MENDOZA



Director: Silvio Bandinelli
 Producer: Attilio Melara
 Story: Silvio Bandinelli
 Screenplay: Silvio Bandinelli, Ernesto De Pascale
 Cinematography: Franco Taccola
 Editor: Massimo Pratesi
 Music: Marco Lamioni
 Cast: Nellie Marie Vickers (*Linda Forrester*), Joseph Nassivera [aka Joey Silvera], Teresa Weigel, Frederick Piantadosi, Eva Pistarino, Tom Wostak, Rocco Tano [Siffredi], Joachin Bandendistel.

Linda Forrester, an FBI agent, is sent to Florence to investigate the trade in stolen works of art and the murderous activities of those involved. She has to work side-by-side with a local police inspector and they soon begin a relationship. Linda takes advantage of the case to immerse herself in the culture of Florence.

This erotic noir-*giallo* is available in softcore and hardcore versions.

Video:

Italy: Video Arcadia/Univideo - 89m 31s, soft-core version, full screen as **Bassi istinti**; Video Ga Ga - hardcore version, full screen as **Masquerade: Intrigo Internazionale**.

MURDER TARGET

L'uomo piu velenoso del cobra

Cobras humanas (Spain)

Jaget Kloden Rundt (Denmark: 'Hunted Around the World')

Plus venimeux que le cobra (France)

More Poisonous Than the Cobra

Target: Murder

El hombre mas velenoso que una cobra

1971 Italy/Spain Eastmancolor Cinemascope 100m

Production Company: Vogue

Cinematografica/Tiki Cinematografica/Devon Film (Rome)/Copercines (Madrid)

Director: Albert J. Walker [Adalberto Albertini]

Producer: Luciano Martino, Tony Di Carlo

Story: Eduardo Maria Broschero

Screenplay: Eduardo Maria Broschero, Ernesto Gastaldi, Luciano Martino

Cinematography: Emilio Foriscot

Editor: Alberto Gallitti

Art Director: Jaime Perez Cubero, Jose' Luis Galicia

Music: Stelvio Cipriani

Assistant Director: Michele Massimo Tarantini

Cast: Giorgio Ardisson (*Tony Garden*), Erika Blanc [Erica Bianchi Colombatto] (*Leslie*), Alberto De Mendoza (*George*), Janine Reynaud, Allan Collins [Luciano Pigozzi], Aurora De Alba, Fernando Hilbeck, Luis Induni, Gill Roland, Manuel Del Castillo, Gianni Pulone, Percy Hogan.

A former American gangster organises a safari in Kenya in order to have his business partner, whom he suspects of being responsible for his brother's death, killed. However, it turns out that he has killed the wrong person. Technically, this one isn't that elusive because I have a third generation copy in Spanish, however it seemed unfair to try and review a film for which I could hardly make out the visuals, let alone understand the plot. From what I could discern this is a borderline entry which is hardly an essential on anyone's list.

LE NOTTE DELLA VIOLENZA

('Nights of Violence')

Call Girl 66 (France)

1966 Italy black and white scope 81m

Production Company: D.M.C. Cinematografica

Director: Roberto Mauri

Story: Roberto Mauri

Screenplay: Roberto Mauri, Edoardo Mulargia

Cinematography: Vitaliano Natalucci

Editor: Nella Nannuzzi

Music: Aldo Piga

Assistant Director: Alberto Salvatori

Cast: Alberto Lupo (*police inspector*), Marilu Tolo (*Carla Pratesi's sister*), Helene Chanel, Cristina Gajoni, Lisa Gastoni, Nerio Bernardi,



Elisa Mainardi, Aldo Berti, Alda [Dada] Gallotti, Alberto Cevenini, Gepi De Rosa, Tullio Altamura, Franco Pesce, Gianni Medici, Ugo Fangareggi, Paolo Solvay, Sergio Sagnotti, Franco Beltramme, Giana Vivaldi, Maria Pia Conte.

Carla Pratesi, a prostitute, is killed. Her death is followed by a number of attempted murders. Carla's sister undertakes her own investigation. Police enquiries uncover a drugs trade connected to a call-girls organization but the murderer remains at large. Finally, a witness identifies the killer as a well-known actor. However, he has a strong alibi (he was shooting a film). The following night, a girl who manages to escape from the maniac's clutches swears he is a different famous actor but he turns out to have a strong alibi too! Eventually the police set a trap in the park and, with the help of Carla, kill the madman. It emerges he had been disfigured by the atomic blast at Hiroshima and went crazy because his deformed features revolted women and put them off having sex with him. He created masks reproducing the features of handsome actors just to approach prostitutes! One of the rarest, strangest, most demented *gialli* ever made: the film appears to have been stitched together from two completely different plot lines (the drug trafficking is used to bring it up to an acceptable running time). Mauri's direction is reminiscent of Doris (**Double Agent 73**) Wishman's outings, with interminable scenes of people talking indoors while nothing happens. There are some impressive shots of the masked man, whose artificially imperturbable facial expression recalls Max Ophuls' **Le Plaisir**, and night scenes in the park are at least well lit, but these factors are too few to save the film. The presence of the

deformed madman would make one expect some plea for diversity, but clearly Mauri is no David Lynch, and the final revelation comes off as a jaw-dropping moment of insanity/hilarity, with the morbid potential of the killer's sexual motivation sadly underused. Director Roberto Mauri was responsible for many of Italy's finest examples of pure, unadulterated trash cinema - such as **King of Kong Island**; **Madeleine**, **anatomia di un incubo**; **The Ballad of Death Valley** and **Le porno killers**.

9 OSPITI PER UN DELITTO

('9 Guests for a Crime')

Un urlo nella notte (alternate title 'A Cry in the Night')

1977 Italy Telecolor scope 90m

Production Company: International Movies S.r.l.

Director: Ted Kaplan [Ferdinando Baldi]

Producer: Mario Di Nardo

Story and Screenplay: Fabio Pittorru

Cinematography: Sergio Rubini

Editor: Enzo Micarelli

Art Director: Giovanni Liccheri

Music: Carlo Savina

Cast: John Richardson (*Vincenzo*), Arthur Kennedy (*Uberto*), Massimo Foschi (*Michele*), Venantino Venantini (*Walter*), Flavia Fabiani, Loretta Persichetti, Dana Ghia, Caroline Laurence.

Nine people sail a yacht to a deserted rocky island for a holiday in old Uberto's villa. The host is accompanied by a group of family members. The men's only thought seems to be having sex with anyone else's wife. One by one, the guests are killed by an unidentified assailant; Elisabetta, half-mad, claims it's the



ghost of Charlie, her lover, who had been killed twenty years before by Uberto and his two sons. The survivors cannot leave the island (the yacht has disappeared) and are easy prey for the murderer. Vincenzo, now the only one left, discovers the truth...

This film is little more than crap, yet it's still enjoyable for those who are into this kind of cinema. The predictable plot (echoing **And Then There Were None**), written by ubiquitous mystery writer Fabio Pittorru, is low on originality and thrills. Nevertheless, there is enough sex, blood and violence (a nasty murder involving a harpoon-gun, for example) to keep one's attention. It's surprising how much emphasis is placed upon the protagonists' adulterous relationships and there is not a single positive character in the whole movie: everyone is greedy, stupid, inept and violent, starting with old patriarch Uberto, so it's hard to feel sympathy for any of the characters. The ghost theme, on the other hand, is handled with no conviction by hack director Baldi, so don't expect any Gothic touches. The male cast is above average: apart from Kennedy, you'll find such genre icons as John Richardson, Massimo Foschi (**Last Cannibal World**) and the great Venantino Venantini, who has one of those incredible faces that are so hard to find on the big screen nowadays. Venantini, one of the unsung heroes of Italian popular cinema, appeared in a plethora of films in these years, working with directors like Margheriti, Ercoli and Massaccesi.

ORDINE FIRMATO IN BIANCO

('Orders Signed Blank')

Indagine su un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto: ordine firmato in bianco (alternate title)

1974 Italy Technicolor Techniscope 115m
Production Company: Aquarius Cinematografica
Director: Gianni Manera
Story and Screenplay: Gianni Manera, Enrico Manera, Ivano Gobbo Maleeva, Mario Pisu
Cinematography: Giovanni Raffaldi
Editor: Mariano Arditì
Art Director: Jean-Paul Verneuil
Music: Carlo Savina
Special Effects: Francesco Reverberi, Vittorio Pescetelli, Raffaele Morino
Assistant Director: Albert Camus (sic)
Cast: Herb Andress, Lucy Chevalier, Joseph Logan [Gianni Manera] (*Luca Albanese*), Irina Maleeva, Paola Arduini, Tony Norton, Mario Pisu, Ettore Ribotta, Alessandro Perrella, Gianni De Angelis, Giulia Scaglione, Milia Braski, Gerard Scimia, Andrea Scandurra, Peter Caruso.

After a phone call has been intercepted (an industrialist is going to receive a huge amount of money from a foreign bank), Mafioso Luca Albanese is assigned to set up a big robbery. He and his gang (three men and three women) then hide-out in a remote mountainous region, but are soon at each other's throats. Moreover, someone is killing Albanese's men one by one, leaving white paint (!?) on the victims' faces... Gianni Manera thinks he's Orson Welles (whom he physically resembles), so he displays his dubious talents not only behind the camera (writing and, erm... directing) but also in front of our very eyes as the hero. Unfortunately, the results of these efforts are more in Ed Wood's league: the pretentious screenplay mixes social comment, action movie clichés (a haphazardly shot robbery) and unexpected ventures in pure *giallo* territory (with the oft-used point-of-view shots of the black-gloved killer) in such a heavy-handed way that not even an expert director like Damiano Damiani could have made anything decent from it. Manera does his best, er, worst, though, from the very beginning, even threatening us with a theme song that must be heard to be believed and starting the film with the following caption: 'from a long-lost note belonging to the archives of the Criminalpol.' Unless you have two long hours of your life to waste, don't watch this film!

Video:

Italy: GVR - full screen; Domovideo. Both as **Ordine firmato in bianco**.

Soundtrack:

Italy: CAM single with two tracks.

PIU TARDI CLAIRE, PIU TARDI...

('Too Late Claire, Too Late...')

1968 Italy black and white scope 89m
Production Company: Bianconero Film
Director: Brunello Rondi
Story: Vittoriano Petrelli
Screenplay: Giuseppe Mangione, Vittoriano Petrelli, Brunello Rondi
Cinematography: Carlo Bellerio
Music: Giovanni Fusco
Cast: Gary Merrill (*George*), Elsa Andersen (*Ann*), Georges Riviere, Adriana Asti, Rossella Falk, Michel Lemoine, Jeanine Reynaud, Tanya Beryll, Marina Malfatti, Ivy Holzer, Angela Minervini, Margarita Robles.

Italy, the early 19th century. A villa is the home of a small English community, all rich and superficial people lounging about in its beautiful surroundings. Claire, George's wife, and Robert, her son, are murdered by a mysterious killer. Thinking the murderer is one of the family, distraught George devises a plan to unmask the culprit. Having met a woman, Ann, who is a dead ringer for Claire, he takes her back to the villa and announces their imminent marriage. Ann is considered an outsider and treated with contempt and hostility, while George fails to find any significant clue to the solution: everybody is to be blamed, at least morally, but the final revelation is more bitter than expected... An incredibly obscure film - which has only recently been unearthed - **Claire** is a strange murder mystery which soon leaves any suspense behind in favour of character study. Director Brunello Rondi was a very peculiar genre cinema habitue: from *gialli* (this oddity and **Le tue mani sul mio corpo**) to W.I.P. (**Women's Prison**), from witchcraft dramas (**Il demonio**) to exotic travelogues (**Black Emmanuelle**, **White Emmanuelle**), his films have always managed to mix cheap thrills with social comment, revealing him as a quite peculiar auteur. Unfortunately, although Rondi certainly had superior technical skills (as shown here: the sumptuous black and white cinematography is a perfect counterpart to refined tracking shots and carefully built sequences) the resulting films usually turned out to be boring, and this one is no exception.

LA POLIZIA BRANCOLA NEL BUIO

('The Police Grope Around in the Dark')

1972 Italy Eastmancolor Telecolor 90m
Production Company: O.I.S.
Director, Story and Screenplay: Helia Colombo
Cinematography: Giancarlo Panchaldi
Editor: Francesco Bertuccioli
Music: Aldo Saitto
Cast: Joseph Arkim, Gabriella Giorgelli, Francisco Cortez, Richard Fielding, Elena Veronese, Danny P. Gerzog, Robert Rewords, Halina Zalewska, Sonny Crowell, Diana Murpy (sic), Margaret Rose Keil, Erika Fisher.

Reporter Giorgio D'Amato agrees to meet his friend Enrichetta at Edmondo Parisi's villa, but when he arrives the model has been stabbed to death with a pair of scissors. Her presence at the villa had been requested by the crippled and neurotic Parisi who has invented a device which allows him to photograph thoughts. The other guests are a strange bunch: there is Eleonora, Parisi's lesbian wife; Alberto, the omnipresent butler and Lucia, the uninhibited housekeeper. The only normal person seems to be young Sara, Edmondo's niece, who enlists D'Amato to find the murderer. Soon the myste-

rious hand strikes again and this time it's Lucia's turn...

This, Colombo's one and only feature (which remained unreleased until 1975), might well be the greatest unseen *gialli* ever. Judging from its demented storyline this film is not simply strange, it's amazing, appearing to wallow in every possible excess - I only hope it lives up to the expectations it raises (this would be a terrific Redemption find!). Just the idea of a machine able to photograph thoughts (a step on from Argento's **Four Flies...**) deserves the film a niche in *giallo* history. Let's hope it pops up soon!

THE POSSESSED

La donna del lago ('The Woman of the Lake')

1965 Italy black and white 84m
Production Company: B.R.C. Produzioni/Istituto Nazionale Luce
Directors: Luigi Bazzoni, Franco Rossellini
Story: from Giovanni Comisso's novel, based on a true story
Screenplay: Giulio Questi, Luigi Bazzoni, Franco Rossellini
Cinematography: Leonida Barboni
Editor: Nino Baragli
Music: Renzo Rossellini
Assistant Directors: Meralda Pantanella, Piero Caponi
Cast: Peter Baldwin (*Bernard*), Salvo Randone (*Enrico*), Valentina Cortese (*Irma*, *Enrico's daughter*), Pia Lindstrom (*Adriana*), Piero Anchisi (*Francesco*), Ennio Balbo (*coroner*), Anna Gherardi, Bruno Scipioni, Mario Laurentino, Vittorio Duse, Virna Lisi (*Tilde*), Philippe Leroy (*Mario*).

Bernard, a writer in a personal and creative crisis, decides to a short break in a hotel where he had stayed the previous year. The proprietors, old Enrico and his daughter Irma, hide a surly attitude, and the villagers seem to be oppressed by an unspeakable mystery. Bernard is looking for Tilde, a beautiful chambermaid whom he secretly fell in love with, but is shocked to find out that the girl killed herself. However, a hunchbacked photographer suggests that she was murdered by Enrico, her lover, because she was pregnant and did not want to abort. Meanwhile, Mario, Enrico's unfriendly son, returns from honeymoon with his seemingly unhappy wife Adriana. The woman, who is kept like a prisoner in her room, tries to contact Bernard, but is soon found dead too. In an increasingly uneasy atmosphere there are two more killings before the culprit is revealed...

This stunning film, Bazzoni's debut, is definitely a one-of-a-kind viewing experience. Its ethereal, moody atmosphere (courtesy of Leonida Barboni's brilliant black and white photography), its autumnal landscapes, its mixture of long, silent sequences and abrupt, dreamlike interludes all make for an unforgettable experience. Even if Bazzoni goes for psychological insights rather than for mystery, he manages to make unsettling use of his inspired cast and locations: the decaying hotel, for example, presided over by the suavely menacing Enrico (great acting by Salvo Randone), or the ever-present shadow of the dead Tilde (a celestial Virna Lisi). Characters are almost ghostly figures, wandering through the traces of their tragic pasts and completely lost in memories, while the hero, Bernard, is a passive figure, continuously wavering between the present and his own feverish, hallucinatory visions, and his investigations only quicken the unavoidable final tragedy. Perhaps the most interesting thing about this (admittedly difficult) film is how it successfully manages to turn a true story into something unique, deeply Italian and simultaneously universal in the way it explores the dark side of man's soul. A masterpiece.

UNA RAGAZZA PIUTTOSTO COMPLICATA

('A Rather Complicated Girl')

1968 Italy Eastmancolor scope 112m
Production Company: Filmena/Fono Roma



Director: Damiano Damiani
 Producer: Giorgio Agliani
 Story: based on *La marcia indietro* by Alberto Moravia
 Screenplay: Damiano Damiani, Alberto Silvestri, Franco Verucci
 Cinematographer: Roberto Gerardi
 Editor: Antonietta Zita
 Art Directors: Damiano Damiani, Umberto Turco
 Music: Fabio Fabor
 Assistant Director: Mino Giarda
 Cast: Catherine Spaak (*Claudia*), Jean Sorel (*Alberto*), Luigi Proietti (*Pietro*), Florinda Bolkan (*Greta*), Gabriella Grimaldi (*Fausta*), Gino Lavagetto (*priest*), Sergio Graziani, Maria Luisa Bavastro, Franco Leo, Franco Giornelli, Nello Rivie, Gaetano Imbro, Margherita Simonini, Roberto Rigamonti, Giglielmo Bogliani, Luciano Catenacci, Maria Jesus Cuadra (*Marina*).

Having casually overheard a confusing phone conversation between two women, Alberto manages to get in touch with one of the callers, Claudia, a painter. The two become lovers, and things are spiced up by Claudia's ambiguous sexual nature and by the presence of her former lover, Pietro. Alberto discovers a pistol in Claudia's handbag, and this leads to a further revelation: she's dominated by her stepmother Greta, who forced her into a clandestine lesbian relationship; of which Claudia is ashamed and wants to end - at all costs. Alberto, now a slave to love, runs Greta over. But Claudia denies urging him to murder...

This morbid tale is in many ways a follow-up to Damiani's earlier, more successful *La strega in amore* ('The Witch in Love'). The author's misogyny is well in evidence here, as is his usual depiction of men as weak, gullible figures. If in *La strega...* Richard Johnson's character finally broke the spell put on him by "witch" Rosanna Schiaffino, here Jean Sorel (the epitome of the typically handsome but ultimately ineffectual *giallo* hero) is a designated victim, much like Jean-Louis Trintignant in *So Sweet, So Perverse*, a figure to be manipulated in Claudia's muddled plans. Interestingly, Florinda Bolkan's role is totally opposite to the character she played in *A Lizard in a Woman's Skin*, while Catherine Spaak is ingeniously cast as the angelic but duplicitous Claudia. Damiani's assured direction and the film's literary source make it palatable for both genre devotees and stiff upper-lipped critics. The film had some trouble with the censors, culminating in a brief sequestration.

Video:
 Italy: Number One Video 'Lo schermo italiano'.

RORRET

Mr. Rorret

Ad altezza d'uomo (Italy: video re-title 'The Depths of a Man')
 1988 Italy colour
 Director: Fulvio Wetzl
 Story: Fulvio Wetzl
 Screenplay: Enzo Capua, Fulvio Wetzl
 Music: Florian Snaider
 Cast: Lou Castel (*Mr. Rorret*), Anna Galiena, Massimo Venturiello, Enrica Russo, Rossana Coggiola.

Mr. Rorret is the owner of a cinema called 'The Peeping Tom' which shows a constant stream of horror films. Rorret dates women from the audience and then kills them, taking sadistic pleasure from their expressions of terror. This film is apparently a well-filmed homage to **Peeping Tom**, with nods to **Psycho** and **Strangers on a Train**. Director Wetzl previously assisted Antonio Bido on **The Bloodstained Shadow**.

Video:

Italy: AVO Film - full screen as **Ad altezza d'uomo**.

IL TERRORE CON GLI OCCHI STORTI

('The Terror With Cross-Eyes')

1972 Italy/France Eastmancolor Cinemascope 97m
 Production Company: Produzioni De Laurentiis Intermaco (Roma)/Universal Productions France (Paris)
 Director: Steno [Stefano Vanzina]
 Story: Giulio Scarnicci, Raimondo Vianello
 Screenplay: Giulio Scarnicci, Steno, Raimondo Vianello
 Photography: Giuseppe Ruzzolini
 Editor: Tatiana Casini
 Music: Guido De Angelis, Maurizio De Angelis
 Cast: Enrico Montesano, Alighiero Noschese, Isabella Biagini, Maria Baxa, Umberto Raho, Daniele Vargas, Lino Banfi, Francesco Mule', Francis Blanche, Lino Coletta, Gastone Pescucci.

To gain fame quickly - three actors - Mino, Giacinto and Mirella, stage a fake murder (Mirella is the 'victim'), then plan to find the 'body' at the most opportune moment. Unfortunately, a real murder takes place in Mirella's apartment when a young woman named Margaret is killed. Having left abundant clues to the fake murder, Mino and Giacinto realise the only way to save themselves from jail is to find Margaret's killer. Despite the intrusions of a stupid police inspector, the two men discover she was killed by a mysterious 'organization'. Although every witness they try to question is killed by a hitman, they eventually unravel the mystery...

This funny spoof, directed by veteran Steno, is a vehicle for Enrico Montesano (soon to become one of Italy's most popular comedians) and Alighiero Noschese (an excellent mimic). They made seven films together, including Mario Camerini's **Lo non vedo tu non parli lui non sente** which has a slightly similar plot. As usual, they were joined by the great Lino Banfi, as well as reliable character actors Umberto Raho and Daniele Vargas and lovely ladies such as Isabella Biagini and Maria Baxa (astronomy teacher Emmanuelle in Mario Gariazzo's trash milestone **Very Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind**).

TERROR IN THE GROVE

1998 Italy colour
 Production Company: Mr. Word Media Group
 Director: Steve Morelli
 Cast: Laura Conti, Betty Anderson, Fovea, Sheila.

A hardcore sex *giallo* based upon the activities of the 'Monster of Florence'.

Video:

Italy: VideoFilm.

THE THIRD EYE

Il terzo occhio

Blodige Haender (Denmark)
Le froid basier de la mort (France)
Das Dritte Auge (Germany)
The Killer With the Third Eye
 1966 Italy black and white scope 86m
 Production Company: Panda Cinematografica
 Director: James Warren [Mino Guerrini]
 Story: Phil Young - freely based on a story by Gilles De Reys
 Screenplay: Dean Craig [Pietro Regnoli], James Warren [Mino Guerrini]
 Cinematography: Sandy Deaves [Sandro D'Eva]
 Editor: Donna Christie
 Art Director: Samuel Fields
 Music: Frank Mason [Franco Mannino]
 Assistant Director: Roger Drake [Ruggero Deodato]
 Cast: Frank [Franco] Nero (*Mino*), Diana Sullivan [Erika Blanc] (*Daniela/Laura*), Gioia Pascal (*Marta*), Marina Morgan (*nightclub dancer*), Richard Hillock (*doctor*), Olga Sunbeauty [Olga Solbelli] (*Mino's mother*).

Young nobleman Mino lives with his mother and Carla, the housekeeper, in an old, decaying castle. He is infantile and morbidly attached to the weird duo; his only hobby is taxidermy. Laura, Mino's fiancée, is met with jealousy and hatred by the two women, and decides to leave the castle; but Carla sabotages her car brakes and she is killed. Mino takes her body back to the castle. Meanwhile, his mother is violently arguing with Marta, who throws her down the stairs and repeatedly bashes her head on the floor. The distraught Mino descends into madness: he picks up a stripper at a nightclub and brings her home, then strangles her while having sex next to Laura's dead body. He does the same with a prostitute. Marta discovers these murders and offers to help dispose of the bodies. A year later, Daniela (Laura's twin sister) arrives at the castle...

It's strange how such an obscure film became the inspiration for one of Italy's best known horror movies, Joe D'Amato's gorefest **Beyond the Darkness**. Claustrophobic, obsessive, and shot in funereal black and white, **The Third Eye** contains a decadent, morbid atmosphere thanks to Guerrini's use of the villa's dusty and decaying interiors, populated by characters who incessantly spy on each other. Franco Nero's Mino closely resembles one of Poe's character's, undermined by hereditary taints and tied to his mother by more than a filial devotion: the monstrous, dominating mother figure is clearly a nod to **Psycho** (as are the stuffed birds), while the sexual component is well in evidence (Marta soaping Laura in a bath, for example, or the nightclub sexy dance scene), as well as the necrophiliac implications of Mino's madness. Obviously gorehounds won't find the gloriously bloody excesses of D'Amato's remake (although the shot of a dead bird being eviscerated by Mino is decidedly upsetting), but there are bursts of savage violence (the Countess' murder, Marta's stabbing) which are still strong in comparison with tamer outings of the same period. Guerrini went on to make a seminal *giallo*, **Date for a Murder**. Mannino's main theme was previously used in Freda's Gothic masterpiece **The Ghost**.

LE TUE MANI SUL MIO CORPO

('Your Hands on My Body')

Schocking (original shooting title)
 1971 Italy Eastmancolor Technostampa Cromoscope 91m
 Production Company: Zenith Cinematografica
 Director: Brunello Rondi
 Story: Luciano Martino, Francesco Scardamaglia
 Screenplay: Brunello Rondi, Francesco Scardamaglia
 Cinematography: Alessandro D'Eva
 Editor: Michele Massimo Tarantini
 Art Direction: Oscar Capponi

BLOOD & BLACK LACE

Style, sex and savagery are the main ingredients of Italian *giallo* cinema, a highly salacious art form which thrives on fetishist images of beautiful, scantily-clad females being menaced by knife-wielding maniacs - often for the most obscure of motives!

Now this lavish book from the publishers of the best-selling *Video Nasties!* brings you the definitive guide to this much-maligned and rarely chronicled movie genre. Entertainingly and informatively written by Adrian Luther-Smith, *Blood And Black Lace* contains full reviews, and exhaustive cast and credit information (including video, laserdisc and DVD release details) on over two hundred *giallo* movies, most of which have never been listed in any other movieguide!

In this cutting edge volume you'll find expertly performed critical dissections of such classic thrillers as Dario Argento's *Bird With The Crystal Plumage*, Antonioni's *Blowup*, and Nicolas Roeg's *Don't Look Now*. And where else can you read all about such guilty treats as *The Iguana With The Tongue Of Fire*, *One On Top Of The Other*, *Strip Nude For Your Killer*, and controversial "banned" movies like Lucio Fulci's stomach-churning *New York Ripper*?

Illustrated with extremely rare full colour posters, video sleeves and stills from the movies in question, *Blood And Black Lace* is an essential purchase for anyone interested in the darker side of Italian exploitation cinema.



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Music: Giorgio Gaslini

Cast: Lino Capolicchio (*Andrea*), Erna Schurer (*Mireille, Andrea's stepmother*), Colette Descombes (*Carol*), José Quaglio (*Mario, Andrea's father*), Daniel Sola (*Jean*), Pier Paola Bucci (*Greta*), Elena Cotta (*Andrea's mother*), Irene Aloisi (*Mireille's mother*), Anne Marie Braafheid (*Nivel*), Paolo Rosani (*George*), Gianni Pulone.

Andrea, the only son of a rich publisher, is a neurotic young man obsessed by his mother. He is dominated by uncontrollable impulses and suicidal fantasies, while his regressive behaviour makes him lonely and frustrated. Incapable of having normal sexual relationships, he spies on his stepmother's adulterous affairs and is obsessed by Carol, a young American girl he secretly films (even when she's making love with her boyfriend), and whom he clumsily courts. Finally, Andrea wins Carol over but is still tormented by the fear of losing his own private world of memories and macabre games...

This morbid Oedipal drama falls marginally into the *gialli* genre, with its final revelation that Andrea's neuroses and loathing for women generate from a childhood trauma (the sight of his dead mother's naked breasts, a potent mixture of sexual titillation and repugnancy). Despite a strong ending, Rondi's capable direction only underlines the tediousness of this slow-moving tale, which includes dialogue scenes that seemingly go on forever. Some surreal moments here and there (a naked girl decorated like a Christmas tree, a dance scene involving hot wax over a woman's body) and sparse nudity enliven the film, but it is too little to keep you awake. Lino Capolicchio's limited acting skills were put to better use by Pupi Avati in his masterful **La casa dalla finestra che ridono**.

Video:

Italy: Videogram/Video DOC - 86m 50s, Full Screen, colours are a slightly washed out as **Le tue mani sul mio corpo**.

24 ORE DI TERRORE

('24 Hours of Terror')

1965 Italy 84m

Production Company: Avis Film

Director: Tony Bighouse [Gastone Grandi]

Story and Screenplay: Gastone Grandi, Tony Martinez

Cinematography: John Krascher

Editor: Lilly Schofield

Assistant Director: Tony Martinez

Cast: Paul Janning (*Jean*), Laurent Madison (*Danielle*), Annie Stuart (*Mary*), Joseph Warrender [Pino Colizzi] (*Tronché*), Sterling Roland [Sergio Rossi] (*Pierre*), Dean Moor (*Lafitte*), Stephen Mason, Rex Robertson, A.V. Belfast.

The mysterious Tronché is being escorted to a castle in France. However, during a stop at a motel, he is attacked by Don Lewis who adopts his identity. The castle is the secret hideout of a drug-pushing gang. Two of the crooks are killed by an unidentified assailant. While the false Tronché, Jean (head of the gang) and Pierre search the place for the murderer, Jean's lover is killed too. The four survivors are trapped because they are in hiding from the police... Doesn't the plot make you shiver with fear? Well, the movie is even worse. The most appalling aspect is Grandi's habit of putting together apparently unconnected shots. The result wavers between pure Dada and beyond-belief *naïveté*. This thriller was a change of pace for Grandi, whose previous efforts were fairytales made for children with almost no budget and unprofessional casts. Other gangster/*giallo* hybrids include Cesare Canevari's more accomplished **Una jena in cassaforte** and Francesco Montemurro's **Un corpo caldo per l'inferno** ('A Hot Body for Hell').

YELLOW - LE CUGINE

('Yellow - the Cousins')

1969 Eastmancolor 89m

Production Company: Cine Produzioni Associate

Director: Gianfranco Baldanello

Story: Augusto Finocchi, Vittorio Metz

Screenplay: Augusto Finocchi

Cinematography: Luciano Trasatti

Editor: Bruno Mattei

Music: Lallo [Coriolano] Gori

Cast: Luisa Seagram (*Marta Garbini Scotari*), Maurizio Bonuglia (*Pierre, Marta's husband*), Renato De Carmine (*Inspector Saccara*), Attilio Diottesio (*Romolo, the gardener*), Franco Ricci (*Marshall Fiore*), Caterina Barbero (*Valentina Barbero, Marta's cousin*), Luigi Ida'.

Following the death of her grandfather, Valentina settles with her husband Pierre, a sculptor, in the old family villa which she partly inherited (half of it belongs to her cousin Marta, who already resides there). Co-habitation proves to be awkward: Valentina is unscrupulous and uninhibited, while Marta is austere and virtuous - at least, on the surface. In fact, when Valentina suddenly dies, the woman initiates a seduction which eventually coaxes Pierre into her arms. The cosy situation soon changes when a police officer turns up to investigate Valentina's death...

This is director Baldanello's only *giallo*; he specialised in westerns but also made sex comedies and a thriller called **The Uranium Conspiracy**.